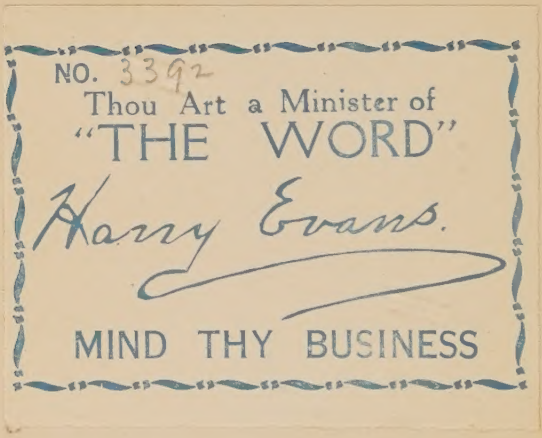
Quiet Talks on Home Ideals

S. D. Gordon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QUIET TALKS
ON *HOME IDEALS*

BY

S. D. GORDON

AND

MARY KILGORE GORDON

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INTRODUCTION

These are the quietest talks of all. They are about the hallowed things of the sacred inner circle, of which they who know them speak in soft tones and reverential spirit, and then only to those whose hearts are sympathetic, and only at such times as the heart-mood is dominant.

The purpose of sending out this little home messenger was formed some seven years ago, and the work of preparation has been going on since then, though the brooding over the ideals themselves runs through a much longer time.

That purpose came as a direct result of letters received, and interviews sought, regarding the true ideals of home-life, and asking about helpful literature on the subject. These letters and interviews, coming through many years, have been from all parts of the United States, from Canada, from the British Isles and Colonies, and from foreign-mission lands; from all classes of people; and from those of well matured years as well as from young people, with the latter predominating. These have been so pleadingly

earnest in their inquiry, and have revealed such real perplexity touching these vital matters, that coming from such wide and varied circles, they seem clearly to indicate a need both deeply felt and wide-spread.

A fuller treatment of the subject of the fourth chapter, "The Finest Friendship's Finest Fruits," is published separately, under the title, "The Quietest Talk."

It will be found that the talks run through a cycle of life, from the time of the making of the life-friendship and the home, until the same sacred time in the life of those who come, and grow up in that home.

This simple little book is like the things of which it talks in one important particular. It takes two in one to make friendship and home, and to grow friendship's finest fruit. And it likewise takes two in one to talk of such things. And even as it is impossible to draw a dividing line between the two in friendship or in home, so it is found quite impossible, as the little book goes out, to draw a line between the work of each one engaged in its writing, so interwoven are both the thought and the language.

IDEALS: GOD'S TUNING-FORKS TO KEEP THE MUSIC OF LIFE UP TO CONCERT PITCH.

Idealizing Light.
Through God's Eyes.
An Opened Eye.
God's Tuning-forks.
"It's Raining Roses Down."
The Secret of Beauty.
The Practical Idealist.
Flying the Flag at the Tip-top.
The Secret of Making Ideals Real.

"Couldst thou in vision see
Thyself the man God meant;
Thou never more wouldst be
The man thou art—content."

Ralph Waldo Emerson.

IDEALS.

Idealizing Light.

One New Year's morning we walked out to a little rise of ground among the hills of southern Kentucky, and watched the sun come up over the eastern slope. First there came a glow of exquisitely soft, pale-green light, such as no artist's canvas ever showed. Gradually it changed into a golden green, and spread out two long slender arms to north and south, as though to gather the world to its warm heart, and always hold it there.

It changed again, and kept changing, but so softly and quietly that we scarcely noticed how the change came, and yet we plainly saw it come. The change was chiefly in the rare coloring, from soft green, to a tingeing together of green and yellow-green, and then to gold, each blending into each other, as only hearts that know love can blend. And the reaching arms of light lengthened, and kept lengthening, as though tenderly eager to take in the whole earth, and fill it with brightness and warmth.

As the light increased, the central spot on the horizon whence it all came, grew into such a blaze of fiery light that our eyes were bothered quite a bit. The glory was too great for them to gaze fully upon it, and involuntarily we half closed them and turned our faces to one side. And the Damascus traveler's phrase, in the story of another light, came vividly to mind: "When I could not see for the glory of that light." Ambitions that had gripped lost their tenacious clutch upon his heart as the glory of *that* light flooded his face. Pet plans blurred and faded, and then slipped out of sight; evil passions lost the heat of their flame; and temptations lost their power to attract and sway, as the beauty and splendor of this new glory threw its wondrous light into his eyes and heart.

And a bit of prayer came quickly up from heart to lip that this other light, that in its transforming beauty was so much above the shining of the sunlight, might affect our eyes too, all the new year, and all the years after this one had begun to grow gray.

That burst of dazzling sunlight came to us just over a little hilltop, through two big beeches, and a group of small cedars. We knew that hilltop, for we had been up there more than once. We knew there was a little family burying-place up there, where precious bodies had

been tenderly laid away long years before. And carved stones of gray told bits of the life-story of those gone. But the place had fallen into disuse and decay. The stones were leaning over, some this way, and some that, like tottering old men, and some were fallen flat. Small scrubby bushes and underbrush covered the ground. The old fence was badly broken down. Everything seemed to spell out neglect, as though the hands that had once lovingly laid these away, had themselves lost their cunning and life, and in turn had been laid away. The old burying-place was forgot. We knew well that was what the little hilltop looked like in plain prosaic daylight, close to.

But, do you know, all that was changed to our eyes as we looked out over the hill, and through its ragged crown of trees at the blaze of glory beyond. The rising sun idealized the neglected hilltop. It was beautiful, with a real rare beauty, as it stood bathed in the early light of the new year's first morning. All the sharp jaggedness was softened. The halo of the sun was over broken fence and neglected graves. And as we looked we didn't think of the decay, but of the beauty. The decay had passed out of our thought. The beauty swayed us. It seemed prophetic of a new life that would come some day to the hill, and that had already come to the former tenants of those laid-away bodies,

and would some glad day come to the bodies themselves, too.

Through God's Eyes.

As we turned about to retrace our steps, more of the idealizing beauty of the light came to view. Just below us a bit lay a little group of negro cabins. We knew them, too, and what they looked like in full daylight, close up. For an errand had carried us there only the day before. The unkempt yards, the broken-down fences patched up with things not originally in the architect's plan for a fence, the familiar rootings of black swine in unabashed closeness of touch to cabin and children, untidy garments, untrained speech, and narrow prejudices—all combined to make a rather unattractive picture, relieved only by the ever present charm of human life, from which the touch of God's gracious hand is never absent.

That was what we knew was down there. But it wasn't what we saw now under the transforming touch of the early morning light. The scene took on something of the beauty of the light of God that shone upon it. The light that softened the rough exterior of the cabins made us think of the caressing hand of God upon the lives within. We remembered that God was not thinking of crude speech, nor ragged out-

side, nor narrow prejudices, but of the human lives that under His touch could be so transformed.

A bit later the sky changed. There were clouds, and they played well their part. For clouds are God's reflectors; they catch the light, and spread out its great beauty before our sight. They are meant to brighten and soften, not to darken. This is true of all clouds, those up in the sky, and those in the sky of your life; though so many have never learned how to look at clouds, and so miss so much. Our new year's clouds caught the yellow glory-light, and played the chemist for us, changing it to a wondrous rose-color.

It seemed as if all the native sweet-brier of England, and all the wild roses of our own land had been absorbed into one great flood of rose-color. And as we watched we thought—yes, we were sure, it was no fancy—there was a fragrance in the air, so fresh and soft and sweet, blowing in our faces; and we knew they were really roses, the roses of life, the flowers of God, up yonder, though unlisted in the cruder botany of our schoolbooks.

Then we came back to the town, to the commonplace round that fills up a part of every day for everybody who is doing his share of the world's work. But somehow the glory of the rising sun cast a mellowing light over the com-

monplace things. And better yet, the glory of that other Light, behind and brighter than the sun, which lighteth every man, crept gently into our inner spirits, sweetening and refreshing, strengthening and breathing in a great peace. And the commonness of the round, still there, and still common, fell into its secondary place, for the glory of the Lord was shining 'round about us. The rough outer shell of things was transfigured by the glory of the ideal in our hearts. There was standing One in our midst whom we *knew*, and *recognized*. And He idealized life for us, while our hands were tugging away at the tough tasks.

An Opened Eye.

God's world is full of things that idealize. The less distinct lights, dawnlight and twilight, starlight and the bewitching moonlight, cast a rare spell over nature. The snow gently covers up earth's rough, unkempt places with its soft clinging white. The green mantle does the same kindly service during the other half of the year. Distance has a peculiar power to close our eyes partly so that only the pleasing outlines are seen. The artist has caught the same fine touch from the hand of God. How a picture idealizes, whether in paint or water-color, or made by the touch of the sun upon the photographer's chem-

icals! The halo of the ideal glamours over every poverty-stricken corner, and every crude and coarse surface.

So, too, God has taught the human heart to idealize. For nothing can exceed or equal the power of love to see the ideal, and be gripped and swayed by it. The neighbor sees a freckled-faced, short-nosed boy, but the mother sees only a face of beauty, and out of its eye looks a *man,* who is going to help shape, and maybe shake the world. The inspector at Ellis Island sees only a couple of bundles being tugged and lugged along by some skirts and a bright-colored shawl, but the young husband impatiently waiting at the gate, whose hard-earned savings have brought her over, sees the winsome maiden whose face still holds him in thrall.

So the inspiring vision of God comes over all life. The idealizing of the outer world is one of God's ways of teaching us to see the beauty and fineness that lie hidden in the uncouth and rough and commonplace; the victory that waits our grasp within every difficulty. It spells out for us the great simple secret Paul had learned: while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are often coarse and commonplace and are only for a passing hour; but the things that are not seen are full of beauty and power, and last forever.

The God-touched eye sees through fog and smoke to the unseen harbor beyond. It insists on steering steady and straight regardless of the storm overhead, and the rock or snag underneath. There is a victory in hiding in every knotty difficulty. Every trying circumstance contains a song of gladness waiting to be freed by our touch. Each disheartening condition can be made to grow roses.

Every man you meet has the image of God upon his face, though so often blurred and marred. Jesus saw a pure redeemed life in the Sychar outcast, and then released it out into blessed messenger service for Himself in her native town. The Jesus-taught man learns to look quickly through soil and sin to the human life within, waiting the transforming touch of sympathy and help. In one of his books, "Salted with Fire," George MacDonald tells of a young woman who had been led astray. A warm-hearted minister found her one night on his doorstep, and guessing her story, brought her into his home. His little daughter upstairs with her mother asked, "Mamma, who is it Papa has in the library?" And the wise mother quietly replied, "It is an angel, dear, who has lost her way, and Papa is telling her the way back." There are a great many all around us needing the same seeing eye and warm hand, though not fallen as low as she.

Life has a great holy purpose to be gripped and won, or done; it is not for mere money-getting, or pleasure-seeking and -sipping. All life is splendidly worth while because of what can be done. Every new day is marked red for us in the calendar of God, for what He means it to bring to us, and to carry from us to others. Each dawning morning is big and bright with new victory eagerly waiting our winning hand.

Ideals grip us, and key us up to doing our best, and giving our best. This is God's plan. They are as the unseen face of God wooing us up the heights. They grow roses in our skies and roses in our eyes, and the fragrance sweetens the air, and freshens our hearts, even while our feet are plodding the old beaten path.

God's Tuning-forks.

Ideals are God's tuning-forks to keep the sweet music of life up to concert pitch. Tuning-forks are valuable in music because they are so largely free from the secondary, or partial tones. And they are independent, too, of the ordinary changes of temperature. The tuning-fork needs to be given a sharp blow to bring out the tone. The standard of musical tone commonly known as "concert pitch" is also commonly known among musicians as "high pitch," giving the greatest number of vibrations in a second of time

of any of the accepted standards. It is rather suggestive, in this connection, to recall that the standard of the French Academy, known as "French pitch," is also commonly known as "*low* pitch"; and that "classical pitch" and "philosophical pitch," notwithstanding their attractive names, are lower than the "concert pitch" standard.

We all need spirit tuning-forks, that can be depended upon to give out the true, full, primary tone, when brought into sharp contact with the difficulties of common life; and that will do it regardless of the weather that may chance to prevail, storm and clear alike, gray and blue. And we need forks that are keyed up to God's concert pitch.

It was of unfailing interest in early years, in the old Covenanter Church in Philadelphia, to watch the precentor "raise the tune." He always took out his tuning-fork, gave it a quick blow, held it quietly to his ear for a few moments while the children watched breathlessly, and then started the singing. The congregation always waited until he got the pitch and began the tune. Although he had been leading the singing every Sabbath for many years, he never depended on his skill or experience, but got a fresh start by the fork every time.

The great Master-musician has given every man a tuning-fork, keyed to concert pitch;

though so many are not used. The few great simple ideals of true life are within every human heart; though so often (most often?) hidden away, shoved into dark corners, and covered up by the rubbish of life. God's ideals are meant to keep our lives full of sweet harmony; and they will, too, if allowed to. In the inner chamber of the soul can be heard distinctly the clear sound of the true key, an exquisite "sound of gentle stillness," to which all the music of life should be set and kept.

But we need to have our inner ears trained in the quiet time, daily, off alone with the Master-musician, with His Book at hand to correct the inaccuracies of our hearing. Then will come the keenness of ear that will keep us from "flatting"; or at least, will make us know when we do "flat"; and will make the sound so disagreeably jarring as to make us reach out eagerly for the true pitch, with a bit of prayer to the Master of the music for His help.

"It's Raining Roses Down."

Practical idealizing is seeing the purpose of God under and behind everything that comes, and insisting on getting it out into real life. It was a man who could see through what is often considered an inconvenience, and a disturbance of one's plans, who wrote:

"It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining daffodils;
In every dimpled drop I see
Wild flowers on the hills.
The clouds of gray engulf the day
And overwhelm the town,—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining roses down.

"It isn't raining rain to me,
But fields of clover bloom,
Where any buccaneering bee
May find a bed and room.
A health unto the happy,
A fig for him who frets,—
It isn't raining rain to me,
It's raining violets." [1]

The rain storm that may disarrange things for you, isn't to be thought of in itself simply, of course, but for the possible good that lies in it. It is a means to an end, an end both of beauty, and of providing our daily bread. The inconvenience it may cause isn't to be thought of except incidentally, in planning to meet and overcome it. Overshoes and raincoats and umbrellas, and careful drying-up afterwards, and all that sort of bother, are simply a bit of the toll of life, that we pay for the flowers we enjoy, and the wheat we eat.

So sickness is a school. It should not be thought of in itself, but only for the flowers it

[1] Robert Loveman.

will bring into bloom, and the finer strength that should grow out of it. It may cause sharp pain, an upsetting of all one's plans, and real anxiety. But these really are only by the way, the bothering with overshoes and other such storm things, the toll on the road, the tuition fee at school. Of course it is true that most of us feel the pain so sharply, and are so worried over the broken plans, and so swept off our feet by the anxiety, that we are pretty apt to forget the real thing.

It's easy not to remember that the storm carries our bread in its arms; that beyond the toll-gate the road leads up the heights into finer air and farther view; and that school work enriches and deepens all the after life. Indeed, if we kept these things straighter, and insisted on looking ahead, through the storm, to the blue and the shine waiting above the gray and the shade, we would find the storm blowing over more quickly. Pain could do its work faster, and better, too, and be off and away, if we used it, and worked with it.

"Is it raining, little flower?
Be glad of rain.
Too much sun would wither thee,
'Twill shine again.
The clouds are very black, 'tis true,
But just beyond them shines the blue.

"Art thou weary, tender heart?
Be glad of pain.

In sorrow sweetest virtues grow,
As flowers in rain.
God watches, and thou wilt have sun,
When clouds their perfect work have done."

The tight pinching in money is unhandy and bothersome—we use stronger words while the pinch is on—but out of it come better management, wise economies; and, yet better, keener thinking, and so keener brains for all the other questions that come; keener outlook into life, and a keener capacity for the enjoyment of life, if —you must underscore that "if"—*if* you keep your eye steadily on the ideal, the possible good waiting your grasp in the difficulty.

The emergency brings quicker-wittedness, and a stronger grasp and use of one's resources, and a sturdier grip for the next one. The practical idealist reaches an eager hand steadily out through all circumstances for the flowers and fruit; and gets them, too.

"Is the road very dreary,
Patience yet!
Rest will be sweeter if thou art weary;
And after the night cometh the morning cheery.
Then bide a wee and dinna fret.

"The clouds have a silver lining,
Don't forget;
And though he's hidden, still the sun is shining:
Courage! Instead of tears and vain repining,
Just bide a wee and dinna fret."[1]

[1] Torquil MacLeod.

The Secret of Beauty.

Our ideals change us. They change the face. The refining, gentling process is going on all the time, though unknown to us. The face always bears the impress of the spirit that reigns within. The real secret of sweet womanly beauty, and of strong manly face is here, and only here, nowhere else.

When Michael Angelo had finished his famous colossal statue of David, "the giant," many of his friends who had not seen him during the years when he was working upon it in Florence, declared with great surprise that he was changed; his face was changed. And as they looked at the statue, and then at the skilful chiseler, it was seen that he had carved his conception of David, not only into the beautiful white stone, but all unconsciously he had carved it, too, into the lines of his own beautified, ennobled face.

A minister who has been preaching for over forty years, told recently of two young women he had known in his early life. The one was decidedly homely, commonly so spoken of, but she was a Christian, with the highest ideals being woven into her daily life. The other was a decided beauty, but selfish, fond of pleasure-seeking, and a lover of the gay society that flattered her beauty. In mature womanhood the changes

that had come into their faces were most striking. The homely girl had become a positively attractive woman in her face, with its fine gentleness, and its very features refined by the dominant spirit of her life. The other's face had hardened and wrinkled and coarsened, until the word "homely," and a yet less pleasing word were suggested by it.

The creative hand of God is an artist's hand. He planned beauty and strength of feature and form for women and men. But the plan can be worked out only by our earnest help. His Spirit in our hearts works out the real rare beauty into our faces through our actively working with Him. Our ideals will make our faces over into what he has planned, if they are allowed to.

The Practical Idealist.

That good word "ideals" has been cheapened quite a bit in some minds. Or, it should rather be said, that men have very commonly come to a cheapened idea of its meaning. For no good thing can be cheapened, in the bad sense of that word; though we can have cheapened ideas about the finest things. The word "ideals" is looked at by many as they would look at a ragged tramp at the kitchen door, with mingled pity and contempt. That is because it means something un-

desirable to them. They think of it as meaning childish castle-building, immature dreamings, visionary imaginings, in the weak meaning of that word "visionary." To them "ideals" mean something clear out of touch with the everyday world of affairs.

Of course, there are plenty of unpractical people who get hold of things wrong end to. There are people who are fond of using the word "ideals," but who don't use it in its true meaning. It is made to cover up childish fancies, half-digested plans, and the like. These people are given to talking a good bit, and are apt to use a good many adjectives and adverbs, usually in the superlative degree; everything is "most." Whereas the practical idealist is a very quiet, matter-of-fact person, more bent on doing than on talking. Hard work usually makes the tongue slower and more cautious.

These visionaries without doubt make it harder for the true idealist to hold to his ideals. For the crowd on the street doesn't think, and constantly confuses the two. The practical man who quietly insists on holding to his ideals is classed with the unpractical visionary. And without doubt this has influenced many to pull the flag down a bit, instead of letting it fly its fine message out at the masthead. Yet this very confusion and thoughtless misunderstanding make the need all the greater. It won't be so

pleasant to keep the flag up. To be misunderstood when one's motives are high and earnest is pretty apt to jar and cut; though some have climbed up to where they ignore and forget the misunderstandings, as they push smilingly on.

Yet of course all this need not keep us from clinging with tight fingers to the real thing, with its fine grain and its rosy hue; nor from the constant uplift of its warm companionship. It should not keep us from doing the crowd the great service of seeing a flag at the top of the pole; nor better yet, from giving Jesus, the great practical Idealist, a clear sounding-board in our lives.

The practical idealist tugging away down in the thick of things knows, and loves to remember, that Jesus is here, now, alongside you and us. Many a churchman, who delights to call himself practical, says, with the air of one humoring a fanciful child, "That's a very pretty thought;" and then proceeds to shut it out of his practical life. He feels quite sufficient in himself for any tug. The other man who knows by experience how real that presence is, sings:

"I cannot do it alone,
The waves run fast and high,
And the fogs close chill around,
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end—
Jesus and I.

"I cannot row it myself,
My boat on the raging sea;
But beside me sits Another
Who pulls or steers with me,
And I know that we two
Shall come safe into port—
His child and He.

"Coward and wayward and weak,
I change with the changing sky.
To-day so eager and brave,
To-morrow not caring to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win—
Jesus and I.

"Strong and tender and true,
Crucified once for me!
Never will He change, I know,
Whatever I may be!
But all He says I must do,
Ever from sin to keep free.
We shall finish our course
And reach home at last—
His child and He."

And as he sings his life is full of victory, and of uplift for the crowd on the road.

Many people think of the ideal and practical as two utterly different things; and, more than different, as opposed to each other. The practical thing to do is not the ideal, they think; and the ideal is not practical. Some go to the extreme of thinking that having an ideal really

hinders, for it makes you unpractical, and visionary in a bad or weak way.

There are some who believe in having ideals but don't believe they can really be lived out. To them the ideal is a good thing to have, even as a pretty picture is enjoyable. You look at the picture and enjoy its beauty, but with no thought entering your mind that it has anything to do with your everyday life. Some go a bit farther, and think of an ideal as something to look up to, with a sort of dim thought that looking up helps to lift up; but without an idea of getting down to hard work in making the ideal a real thing in life.

Flying the Flag at the Tip-top.

If in conversation one refers to the true ideal toward which conduct and life should be pitched, and by which they should be governed, it is quite common to hear someone say, "Oh! yes, of course, that's the ideal, but, you know, we're living down in the world." The inference being that it is impossible to have such ideals in practical life; that we must take things as they are, and move along where the crowd goes, and as it goes. The remark is generally made with a peculiar positiveness of tone and manner, as though the whole matter were settled then and there, and nothing more could be said.

Every such remark is a confession of weakness and defeat. It tells a story of knowing the right, and refusing to hold to it, because the crowd pulls the other way. It is a cowardly pulling down of the flag, and surrendering to the enemy, without so much as a decent show of fight. In non-essentials we should follow the line of least resistance, saving our strength for the things worth while. But in the great essentials we should never budge by so much as a half-hair-width, regardless of resistance. Yet we can smile sweetly all the time, with the wholesome fragrance of a pure life back of the smile. The highest ideals send a fine flavor out into the personality.

There is no greater nor kindlier service we can render to those we touch than the tactful holding to our ideals, out in the contacts of life; whether at the meal hour, in the business circle, in the little group of callers, at the afternoon tea, or the more formal social affair. There are some who exploit their ideals untactfully; and that is not good. Though it is not as bad as those who keep their ideals in hiding, even while they are being abused, and sneered at, and while lower ideals, that are really low ideals, are being freely talked.

But then the cowardliness of some people with really high ideals is painful. The social law that you must be agreeable, and say only agree-

able things in social gatherings, leads many of us badly astray in lowering or hiding our flags. There is a cowardly fear of being thought of as a little unusual, or queer, or marked by some oddity. The desire to be thought only well of grips us so. It is true it does take thoughtfulness and strength to speak clearly and positively of the true ideals among those who do not accept them. It takes yet more strength and depth, and real touch with the ideal Man, to do it tactfully in such an atmosphere.

But of course it can be done. And that is a part of the life-mission of him who would ring true. A wisely chosen word spoken in the social circle, where the opposite may be the popular thing, spoken gently with a face that unconsciously fits the word, and a life behind that steadies it, is in perfect accord with the most rigid social canons. It is just what so many need. It tends to bring out to the fore whatever odd remnants of conviction there may be in hiding in that circle.

We need to train ourselves away from thinking that the sweet serious things of life may not properly be brought into any social gathering. The common standards of social contacts to which so many have been trained simply do not make provision for the more thoughtful, serious things. There is always a tendency to being light and even frivolous. The bright breezy

good cheer that properly belongs to the social hour easily crosses the line into the thoughtless and frivolous.

When a bit of the thoughtful does come in, as come in it will, it is quite likely to be subjected to the indignity of brilliant—or, quite as often, maybe oftener, not-brilliant—frivolousness. And that is the sort of atmosphere in which so many have gotten their social training. It doesn't fit naturally into such training to retain sweet seriousness in the midst of the cheery good-fellowship and light exchange of the social hour.

Yet it can be done, and there is no finer sounding-board for letting our ideals ring and sing their music out into human hearts. And no music finds more open, grateful hearts for its uplift and rhythm.

> "The robin sang out through the rain,
> He waited not a golden day.
> The gladdest thing that he could say
> Might not be needed so again.
> The robin sent his richest strain,
> Adown dim, slanting lines of rain."[1]

There comes to mind a scene in a drawing-room, one summer afternoon. A group of callers were chatting with their hostess. One of the callers was making the usual sort of frivo-

[1] Edith H. Kinney.

lous, half-cynical remarks. The hostess was an earnest Christian woman, active in service. We knew her as believing in the highest ideals, and trying to teach them faithfully, and live them consistently. Yet she met her guest more than halfway in his run of talk, not merely assenting laughingly, but suggesting some of the same sort and in the same way.

We could easily see that she was simply following her earlier social habit, that had been fixed before her deeper life had developed. Yet she had both the moral conviction and courage, and the tactful grace of speech and manner, to have drawn her caller easily up to a higher level, through the doorway of his own talk, if she had thought to do it. And what a blessing it would have been to him!

Another similar scene comes to mind. A company of young people had gathered for a social evening. Among the guests was a young woman who insisted on standing on the level of her ideals in any gathering, and with any individual. A young man who had been introduced to her, said, after a little conversation, "May we slip off to a quiet corner for a few minutes, where we will not be interrupted? for you are the only young woman I have met this evening who will talk thoughtfully." At the evening's close this young woman and another, a friend, were chatting together. The friend was

thoughtful and earnest, too, but with a strong desire to be agreeable that led her to remain on the level of the trifling talk in which she found others indulging. Now she turned to the first young woman mentioned and with much surprise said, "I saw you talking with Mr. So-and-So," naming the young man who had made the request, "and I wondered how *you* ever stood him, for I was never more bored in my life than with him this evening; I was never with one who could talk so much of little nothings, and be as frivolous as he."

Each of these, the young man and the second young woman, had high ideals, and longed for fellowship in them; and yet each lacked the bit of quiet courage to give the simple tactful upward turn to the conversation, lest it might not be acceptable. And each suffered a distinct loss, in his own life, and lost a golden chance to help a hungry heart. Whenever one person holds steadily to the highest, others will be kept up by that very steadiness.

The Secret of Making Ideals Real.

The most striking thing to mark keenly about ideals, God's ideals, is this: *they have been lived.* The thing *can* be done because it *has* been done. They have been lived in one of the worst moral periods of history, and in one of the religiously

narrowest and most bigoted corners of the earth.

It seems to be pretty well settled now, that long ago a Man lived, for as much as thirty-three years, who held the highest ideals, and never compromised them one whit, in the life he lived. Yet he was not removed from the sort of life we live. He had to work hard to earn a living for himself and his household. He lived in a very humble sort of family, where all the testings of ideals come closest home. He belonged to a little village community, just such as most of us know, and live in, or have lived in. And He actually lived his ideals amid such surroundings,—ideals that have been commonly recognized as the moral high-water mark of all history.

God is an idealist. And Jesus came to let men see that this ideal God fits perfectly into human life, just as it goes on in every-day affairs. Certainly no one will think that the world was in an ideal condition when Jesus came. Historians are agreed that it was in about as bad shape morally as a world could get into. And all are agreed, too, that this Jesus lived a truly ideal life, and at the same time an intensely practical life, fitting into things just as he found them.

Though He was divine in a sense that no one else was or can be, He was also human with a naturalness and simplicity that none other has

known, though all may know. That He lived a truly human life, just such as common men are expected to live, that is, with no special gift of divine grace beyond what any man may have, is clearly shown by the simple but very striking fact that is brothers, brought up in the same family, did not believe in His divine claim and mission.[1]

To them there was nothing in His life as they had known Him, such as they supposed there should be if He were really the Son of God that He said He was. There could be no stronger nor simpler evidence of the perfect naturalness of the human life He lived in Nazareth, than this disbelief by these brothers, who lived with Him for years in the same home.

Yet mark very keenly that Jesus didn't find it easy to live His ideals. He was stubbornly opposed in them, both at home, and in His home village, and out in public life. He had to fight for them, and to fight hard, every foot of the way. And it was real fighting, too, with moist brow, and shut jaw, and earnestly breathed prayer. He lived them in the presence of, and in spite of, sneers and criticism and cynicism and attempted violence.

And He was a man, a human, as truly a man as though only a man, living His life just exactly as we live ours. That is to say, He personally made choice of these ideals as His own.

[1] John vii:3-5.

He depended upon His own strong resolution, backed by earnest prayer, in keeping true to them. He maintained them against all comers; just exactly as one must do to-day.

And,—listen softly, with the ears of your heart, —that Man promised to have the same Spirit that filled Him and steadied Him, come into each one of us, and lead us safely and victoriously along the same well-beaten path He traveled. Aye, and some of us have found out that that wondrous Spirit does come, and does lead along that old road up to the heights. Even though a tear-misted vision of slips and faults, and at times of only partial victories lies behind, yet the ideals are sweeter than ever since they have been worked into real life.

THE FINEST FRIENDSHIP: THE RHYTHMIC LIVING OF TWO TOGETHER.

The Master Loomsman.
Clear Thinking Helps Right Living.
A Choosing Love.
Love's Sure Marks.
The Basis of Friendship.
God's Ideal Friendship Plan.
"Perfect Music Unto Noble Words."
"Even as Christ."
The Divine-Human Trinity.
"Behold a Friend!"
A Bit of Real Life.

"But ye toil up hand in hand, and carry each other's burdens.
Ye commune of hopes and aspirations, the fervent breathings of the heart,
Ye speak with pleasant interchange the treasured secrets of affection,
Ye listen to the voice of complaint and whisper the language of comfort,
And as in a double solitude, ye think in each other's hearing."

Martin F. Tupper.

THE FINEST FRIENDSHIP.

The Master Loomsman.

Friendship is unselfish love between two hearts. It is the highest born, and longest lasting, and finest woven of any tie that binds human hearts together. It is highest born, for its birthplace is the heart of God, where every bit of love known among men was born. It is longest lasted, because it is so strong. It won't break. It never does break. It can't break. It never yet has been broken. You might as well think of the unseen bands of Orion breaking, or, higher up, of a quarrel breaking out between God and His Son. For friendship is a bit of God's own self even as His Son is. It is longest lasted simply because there is no end to it.

And it is the finest woven. No such bit of loom work was ever done. Its strands have been picked out with greatest care by the Master Loomsman. They have been intertwined by the same skilled hand that wove the bands that hold the earth true and steady to the sun; and that wove the ties that bind a mother's heart to her

child. The finely spun threads are so deftly and rhythmically tangled that they withstand all attempts at breaking. The mark of that loom and of that Weaver are upon every bit of this wondrous fabric wherever found.

Friendship is not a native of any one land. It is native to all lands. Wherever there is a human heart there is its native heath. There it may be found growing both sturdy and fine. Though it often plays the part of a pilgrim seeking a home, it is never a foreigner nor a stranger. For wherever it is found there is a human heart; and wherever there is a human heart there is the heart of God; and wherever these two hearts are friendship is, and is at home.

Like God, it is no respecter of persons, nor of circumstances. It will not despise the king because of the gilt of his trappings; nor the cottager because of the bareness of his floor, or the spareness of his fare. Into the human heart regardless of the outer side it comes to gladden and grace, to arouse and inspire. Neither wealth nor luxury nor mere mental culture can successfully woo it; and neither poverty nor sickness nor slander can hinder its coming and staying, but may become a spur to call out its fineness and fragrance all the more. This is true, even though it is also true that it is one of the rare occurrences to find friendship growing its fullest and finest fruit.

Friendship has inspired the poet's pen to its sweetest, choicest lines. It has brought out the best of heart and brain in the discussions of the philosopher's porch in olden time. It has done more to enrich and refine the letters carried by post and messenger than any other influence. It has been the mainspring of action back of every great worthy deed ever done. The building of nations, the courageous fighting of battles, the winning of victories, the penning of literature classed as classic—every noble achievement of man's hand has been due to its subtle touch upon his heart.

And if anyone is disposed to question this in regard to some person or event that he calls to mind let him thoughtfully sift down and through to the roots, and he will find the warm fertilizing presence of friendship there, however hidden below the surface, or tangled with other things above. Even Napoleon, who towers so high in the realm of mere achievement, and who has been so generally dubbed as utterly heartless in the sweep of his terrible ambition, came strongly under its influence more than once. It may well be doubted if his great genius would have had the marvelous success that came to him had it not been for the subtle power and winsome tact of his real friend Josephine.

Friendship has the daring courage of the man defending his home; the clinging tenacity of the

mountain goat on the dizzy heights of the far cliff; the soft tenderness of a mother with her new-born babe; the rare judgment of a wise woman in her gentle-voiced counseling; the unfailing faithfulness of the heavenly Father in his dealing with sinful men; the unflinching steadiness of the skilled surgeon swiftly plunging his blade into the living flesh; and the fine-grained strength of the Son of God as He climbed the Calvary steep.

Clear Thinking Helps Right Living.

For friendship in its simplest essence is love. A friend is a lover with all the strongest, sweetest meaning that hallowed word ever has, or can be made to have. And the warm breath of love is over all life. The heart of God bends tenderly down over all men like a brooding mother over her babe. Love comes into human life as the soft south wind comes at the end of winter. It makes all the year a springtime, and every month of the calendar a June. Under its warm touch the cold snow crystals of common life are compelled to make a way for the early crocus, and then, quickly for all the other flowers with their fragrance and bloom; and soon after for the grain and fruit that keep all life alive and vigorous.

Where life lives love is. Down the dark dirty court of the slum of New York or London, of Constantinople or Bombay, it is sure to be found; even as the blades of green grass will grow up out of the narrow wedge of soil between the rows of brick on the sidewalk, as the ivy finds a rooting in the thin crevice on the side of the steep rock, and as the pure white lily grows up out of the black ooze and slime at the bottom of the pond. Among the money changers of Wall street, and the London Exchange, and the Parisian Bourse, it is as surely doing its gentling work under the hardened surface, as among the fluttering, gay devotees of fashionable society. Though most times you would never guess it was so. And if it can grow in such soil it can grow everywhere.

"Upon the marsh mud, dank and foul,
A golden sunbeam softly fell,
And from the noisome depths arose
A lily miracle.

"Upon a dark, bemired life
A gleam of human love was flung,
And lo, from that ungenial soil
A noble deed upsprung." [1]

Now it is true that these great words, "friendship" and "love," have been both borrowed away from their true use, and have been abused.

[1] L. M. Montgomery.

There is a certain kindly courtesy that has become very common, that calls a mere acquaintance a friend. The gentling influence of the very word "friend" has seeped into all human contacts, softening and mellowing life with its fine touch. And that use is not open to criticism. But one should remember that this is a taking of the word away from its own meaning. It is a sort of borrowing it to help soften and sweeten the common contacts of life And we all know full well that life needs all of that sort of borrowed help it can get. And the word "friend" is so rich that it is quite willing to have its needy neighbors come in to borrow at its back door.

And love gets badly crowded by much that is not love, and so much mixed up with such things that men constantly confuse it and them, and call things by the fine name of love that have no kinship at all with it. And then, too, it must be remembered that the words have been stolen, maliciously and thievishly stolen, and used as labels on bad stuff. There is no end to the bad stuff that has been passed about freely under these labels. But in all such borrowings, and stealings, and mixings, and such kindly usage, we must keep our eyes keenly open so as not to get the real things and its imitations confused.

Walking along the street one day down South, a thoughtful woman in the group asked, "What

is the difference between love and friendship?" It was a keen question. For the two have been much discussed and not always with satisfactory results. They have been compared and contrasted to the advantage of "friendship," and the disadvantage of "love." It has been quite commonly said that friendship is an unselfish love that desires no returns; and indeed that never thinks of any benefit or advantage to itself, but is concerned only with the one loved. And that love is a passionate desire for some one, that leads a person to want to have that one for his own.

No word has been so much misunderstood and misused and abused as the word "love." In Jesus' day its own meaning seemed completely lost in the thoughts, and in the lives, and in the speech of men. The word was freely and commonly used for that which needed a *u* and an *s* and a *t* after the initial *l* to tell its real meaning. Yet Jesus did not hesitate to use the word for the real thing, with his own life to bring them together again, until the whole world re-learned something of the real meaning.

Yet a little bit of thinking down into the real meaning of these words, and of the things they stand for, seems to make it very plain that this common difference is not right. And if it isn't right, then it isn't good. For confused thinking makes confused morals and worse than con-

fused lives. Clear use of words helps to clearer thinking. Clear understanding of truth always helps to a better living of it.

A Choosing Love.

The shadow stands out blackest when the sun is out brightest. It will help here if we can get a clear, simple definition of just what love is, and so of what friendship is. There is nothing discussed more, and maybe understood less. There is no word harder to find a definition of, and yet no word that can be more simply defined.

Love is the thoughtful outgoing of one's whole nature to another. It is really an act of the will, though most times unconsciously so. It belongs distinctly in the realm of choice. It is not essentially an emotion merely, though it sweeps all the emotional power of a man like the whirlwind sweeps down the valley. It is not of the heart primarily, though it absolutely controls the heart. It is wholly in itself a matter of choice. The will gathers up all the information at hand, and displays it skilfully before the heart until it is enraptured and completely swept along as the will meant it should be.

"—When a soul, by choice and conscience, doth
Throw out her full force on another soul,
The conscience and the concentration both

Make mere life, love. For life in perfect whole
And aim consummated, is love in sooth,
As nature's magnet-heat rounds pole with pole." [1]

This does not mean at all that a man usually thinks of love that way; nor that he is conscious of doing the thing in this way. Yet this is what is done in greater or less degree wherever there is love; and it is the greater degree where the love grows strong. Of course this is talking about the real thing, as it grew up in the heart of God, and grows up in human hearts.

We must remember that there are the immature stages of love. There is a great deal of what may, for lack of a better word, be called "chance" or "unchoosing" love. That is to say, an attachment or liking grows up between two who are thrown together constantly, without any element of choosing entering in. So brothers and sisters grow up side by side. They have no choice in being there in the same family with the others. Mere contact brings this "chance" or "unchoosing" love, in which choice plays no part. Though this may at any point begin to grow up into the real love that chooses, and of course does so constantly, in countless numbers of instances.

Many marriages are made, in which, while each of course chooses the other, yet the element of mere chance, an unchoosing nearness

[1] Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

and liking, plays by far the larger part, and so sooner or later they are separated because that sort of love can't stand the brunt of real life. The easy modern courts furnish no end of illustrations here. Yet all this so-called "chance" or "unchoosing" love furnishes fertile soil for the coming of the real thing. Out of it there is constantly growing, usually by imperceptible stages, a choosing love. This may be called an immature stage of real love.

Then there are things that are merely like love. The word "love" is constantly used in daily talk for that which is not love, though it has a near likeness to it. The word "like" is a really strong word. It is even given by the dictionaries as a synonym for love, and is so used constantly. Yet it suggests only the impression that things or persons make upon us, but with no answering suggestion of what we may choose to do as a result of that impression. Therein it is radically different from love. It should be used much oftener where the word "love" is now commonly used. Yet this is not meant at all to criticise the usage, but only to help us to clearer thinking, and so into the clover fields of real love.

And then, even more than these, there is the constant mixture of love, real love, with base, bad motives and emotions. Much that is not pure and good gets so mixed up in the

human heart with real love that it is impossible for the human eye to see the line between. Selfishness is a foul poison ivy that has overspread all life until we even fail to recognize it as a poison. Its tendrils are very small and thin, but of remarkable toughness, and with a peculiarly tenacious, clinging clutch. Its lean pointed fingers run in everywhere. They reach in, and coil themselves around the purest, holiest things, and into the most hallowed corners of the saintliest of hearts. Selfishness takes on the color of its surroundings until the keenest eye is deceived, and the most thoughtful heart befooled. No corner, and no thing seem quite free of its subtle slimy touch.

Love's Sure Marks.

Yet the real thing of love can be recognized surely and not slowly. It has certain characteristics that never fail. They are often imitated in part, but they cannot be imitated successfully enough to befool the thoughtful eye, or to stand the sharp test of actual life. It costs too much. The imitators balk at paying.

Love's first characteristic is this: an intense longing to do something for the one loved. Love must do something for the other. It abhors inaction. There is a constant thinking even in its sleep, of what can be done for the other; a con-

stant restless seeking to do it. But mark keenly, the thought of any return never enters in, not even by so much as the shadow of the toe of the boot at the crack of the door. This is the first and last and chief characteristic of love. It lies at the very tap-root of all else. There is no love whenever, underneath whatever else may be there, this is not the mainspring of all that is done.

A second characteristic grows naturally up out of this love: love is utterly self-forgetful in its planning for the other. That is the common way of saying it. And yet it isn't the best way, not even a good way. For there is a self-forgetfulness that is not good, and so is even bad in its effects. There is something that is higher than self-forgetfulness, and that is self-remembrance for the other's sake; thinking of yourself, and then deliberately putting yourself aside for the sake of the other. This is really the meaning that people have in mind many times, maybe most times, when they use that word "self-forgetful." The real meaning is really the reverse of the word so commonly used for it.

Love *thinks* of itself; and then thoughtfully puts itself off to one side, so far as may be good or best for the one loved. It thinks of itself that it may the more intelligently give the other one the preference. And there is yet more; it thinks of itself constantly that so it may not

become in any way a burden or a hindrance to the other.

A third characteristic is a willingness to sacrifice for the one loved. This is simply the second characteristic in its next and finest stage. Sacrifice is the voluntary giving of yourself out for another to the point of pain; that is, until you feel it, really feel it. It must be voluntary; for if you can't avoid the hurting thing or experience, it is only suffering or privation, not sacrifice. It must bring you real cutting pain, else it may be merely selfish adjustment, or self-gratification. Sacrifice is choosing to let a knife cut in until you wince, and maybe have to rally all your power to hold steady, that so the other one may be helped. There is a great deal of suffering that is not sacrifice; because it can't be helped, or avoided. Love *can* avoid sacrifice; but for the loved one's sake, it *won't*.

There is another mark that is peculiar to love, and is unfailing. Love never fails to play the part of the surgeon when need be. It will unhesitatingly stain the razor-edged blade with some of the life-blood of the one loved, *if* so purer and stronger life may come. Yet it is always done with love's own unequalled skill. This is a great test; the severest, would you say? the surest? There is nothing harder to do, and harder yet to do skilfully, cutting as deep as the bad growth, not too deep, swiftly, surely,

steadily, and then with equal skill binding up the wound, and nursing it until healed. Many a life has been badly hurt because love was not allowed a free hand here. Love itself never faileth in its faithfulness, nor its skill.

And love longs for fellowship with the one loved. Yet here again the longing is up on the highest plane. There may be a longing for fellowship that is selfish, that desires it for its own enjoyment. But the driving, controlling purpose under love's longing for fellowship is that the loved one may be brought out into fullness of life, and of the enjoyment of life, even as the flower under the sunshine. And if this seems like getting the thing keyed up too high for true music, remember that love will deny itself fellowship if that would be better for the other.

"Love:—What a volume in a word, an ocean in a tear,
A seventh heaven in a glance, a whirlwind in a sigh,
The lightning in a touch, a millennium in a moment,
What concentrated joy or woe in blest or blighted love!
For it is that native poetry springing up indigenous to Mind,
The heart's own-country music thrilling all it chords,
The story without an end that angels throng to hear,
The word, the king of words, carved on Jehovah's heart!
Go, call thou snake-eyed malice mercy, call envy honest praise,
Count selfish craft for wisdom, and coward treachery for prudence,

Do homage to blaspheming unbelief as to bold and free
philosophy,
And estimate the recklessness of license as the right
attribute of liberty,—
But with the world, thou friend and scholar, stain not
this pure name;
Nor suffer the majesty of Love to be likened to the
meanness of desire:
For Love is no more such, than seraphs' hymns are
discord,
And such is no more Love, than Etna's breath is
summer." [1]

These are some unfailing marks of love. Whenever they are lacking love is either absent, or, is being so crowded down into a corner that it can't show its real self. This real thing of love with its roots down in the choosing power, knows no break, no sagging, no end. The tugging of its strands by the common frictions of life only make its fiber tougher. To keep this fine face of love clearly before us all the time will make us keener and quicker to recognize the things that are not the real thing, but that use its name.

The Basis of Friendship.

Friendship is peculiarly love between *two*. Solitude is not a natural soil for the growth of this fine plant. While solitude is an essential

[1] Martin F. Tupper.

to strong life, it is only as a training in the making and maturing of character for service out in the crowd. There cannot be fully matured loved without two who are fully joined in the love. The human unit is not one, but two; each distinct and complete in itself, but each needing to find and fit into its answering self in another in order to make the higher, fuller, complete personality.

There are certain things in the two that draw them together however widely separated; that lead them to recognize each other; and that bind them together so close and tight that no wedge edge is thin enough to get in between. Friendship depends on likes and differences; things in which the two are akin, and other things in which they are different, but with these differences fitting into each other so nicely as to make a perfect union.

These differences and likes underlying friendship run side by side, so intertwined that it is quite impossible to draw an exact line between. They run along the four natural lines of the physical, the mental, the spirit that animates, and then the personality,—that which includes these with an indefinite something more added. And they extend, too, to certain acquired traits, to the controlling aim or purpose, and the degree of culture attained.

There are persons who are attractive to each

other physically without much affinity otherwise, and, uncontrolled, this may lead into grave wrong. There are those whose ways of thinking fit into each other perfectly, not because they think alike, nor because by the attraction of opposites they are radically different, but because they are both alike and different in just the degree that makes perfect oneness and fellowship. Many a two are drawn together because of the strong affinity of spirit, though far apart in the degree of culture that has come, or in the mental traits that mark each. Full friendship is possible only where there is the full mutual drawing together, and the full supplementing of each by the other in all these regards.

Now, of course, there are a great many *partial friendships*. Love is ever busily working out the best possible adjustment of human lives. Frequently two will have a very warm, real friendship for each other in certain directions. As long as their contacts are confined to the things, or one thing, in which they are alike and sympathetically different, there is a real love, and a real, rare enjoyment. But outside of those things they are as far apart as the earth's magnetic poles. Their differences are radical and not sympathetic; they tend to pulling away instead of drawing together.

Then there are partial friendships in point of time; they don't last. Many times that is be-

cause the early friendship was a superficial one, the root not going down into the sub-soil of the real life. And many times there is this touch of the tragic in such partial friendships, that the two have failed to keep pace in their growth. The one has grown; his nature has deepened, his outlook broadened, his heart mellowed, his mind taken on a keener edge; the ideals have refined, and the heart longings are less easily satisfied.

The other has gone grubbingly along, sleepily content to stay where he was. In growing and in not growing they have grown apart. Yet there may be even here a partial friendship, a tender clinging to a personality, once attractive, and to attaching memories; but it no longer yields the sweets it once did.

But the finest, fullest friendship, the full-grown thing, can be only between the two whose differences are all sympathetic, and whose likes all harmonize, and who will grow together, side by side, through the years up to the outer rim of time. Wherever these differences and likes blend most perfectly and fit themselves together most nicely and fully, there only can the finest friendship come. And only as these two grow together, each keeping pace with the other, and each gently keeping the other's pace up with his own, can that finest friendship grow into its full flower and fruit.

"What is the best a friend can be
To any soul, to you or me?
Not only shelter, comfort, rest—
Inmost refreshment unexpressed;
Not only a beloved guide
To thread life's labyrinth at our side,
Or, with love's torch lead on before;
Though these be much, there yet is more.

"The best friend is an atmosphere,
Warm with all inspiration dear,
Wherein we breathe the large free breath
Of life that has no taint of death.
Our friend is an unconscious part
Of every true beat of our heart;
A strength, a growth, whence we derive
God's health that keeps the world alive.

"Can friend lose friend? Believe it not!
The tissue whereof life is wrought,
Weaving the separate into one,
No end hath, nor beginning; spun
From subtle threads of destiny
Finer than thought of man can see.
God takes not back His gifts divine;
While thy God lives, thy friend is thine." [1]

God's Ideal Friendship Plan.

And when one calmly thinks the thing thoughtfully through, the clearer does it become that such friendship can exist only between the two that God made and meant for each other,—a man and a woman joined together by the same

[1] Lucy Larcom.

hand that made them. The greatest possibilities of friendship can be realized only between a man and a woman because the elements that go to make the strongest, fullest friendship are found here in full measure, and only here. And further because, as we shall find a little later in this series of talks, the finest fruitage of friendship is possible only between two such.

It is fairly fascinating to see how fully this law of likes and differences, which underlies all friendship, is found fully developed and illustrated here, and only here. This comes out simply and clearly as we note the likes and differences between man and woman.

But first of all certain *unnatural* differences between the two should be noticed, and noticed keenly. It is both remarkable and pathetic to mark the striking fact that woman peculiarly has been the victim of ignorance and prejudice and evil passions for long centuries. It is as though the spirit of evil, knowing well her remarkable power, has aimed its heaviest batteries at her. As a result her character and dominant characteristics have been radically affected. Jesus' marvellous influence is nowhere seen more than in the change that has come in woman's condition since He was here. Where He is least known, her condition is lowest; where best known, highest. Yet even in Christian lands much of the old-time influence still clings.

These unnatural differences may be put thus: Woman is more swayed by her feelings. She is said to reach conclusions, not by logical mental processes, but rather by a sort of intuition, by which is usually meant a sort of lower though keen perception, rather than by the higher thoughtful consideration. Then woman's mind is taken up more with the little details of things, with no apparent power or disposition to grasp the larger outlines of a question, and see it in its proportions.

These are some of the things in which woman is commonly thought of as being different from man, and indeed inferior to him. And in large measure much of all this is true. But it should be keenly remembered that these are unnatural differences, due to the long-time slavery to which she has been subjected, and still is so largely. It is striking that these same things just as sharply characterize the classes of men who have been held down as woman has been. These unnatural differences should be laid aside now, that we may see clearly the true differences as God planned them for the making of life's friendship.

The natural differences between man and woman bring out the natural likenesses between the two. They are really differences in likenesses; the differences in texture of the same fabric; such differences in likes, such diversity

in unity, as work together for the perfect condition in which friendship can do its full work.

First of all, there is the physical difference. He is built for strength; she, not for strength, but altogether for the most delicate and difficult task entrusted to human hands. He is larger, as he needs to be for work; she, smaller, for her task needs the strength of fineness rather than the mere brute strength. His greater strength is a natural guard and protection for her more difficult task. Here are physical likenesses and differences that mutually attract, and that work perfectly together for love's union in life's tasks. It is a bit of the horrid irony of sin's influence that, so largely, the burdens requiring physical strength have been thrust upon woman. Even in Christian lands she is still made largely the household drudge.

Then there is the mental difference; woman is naturally subtler and keener and swifter in her mental processes. Man is slower and bulkier. Though the centuries of slavery have made us slow in discovering, and slower yet in acknowledging this; and, of course, many have not, and won't do either. But the finer physical texture of her brain points to the difference. The difference and likeness here not only attract each other, but taken together make the complete human mentality.

A third difference is in the sphere of action

of each. Man is meant for leadership; woman for guidance and inspiration and co-operation in his leadership. All men are not leaders, even in a small way. And woman has often revealed rare leadership, especially in emergencies, when no philosopher's lantern could disclose even a scraggly scrap of a man. But these are exceptions on both sides. The two together make the perfect action of life; he, with his rugged strength, and larger-grained fiber in the lead; she, with her gentle pervasiveness, by his side, a bit in the shadow, making and moulding him, as he in turn makes and moulds the events and actions of life.

Then there is the difference, so difficult of definition, told by the words "masculine" and "feminine." It runs through the other differences, but is something yet more. Practically that word "masculine" means strength, and the word "feminine" means the heart qualities; it might be said, the *soft* qualities, in the fine, strong meaning of "soft." Fineness as contrasted with strength is the essential meaning of "feminine"; and is revealed in the softness of woman's flesh, the gentle rounding of her smaller face, the finer texture of her body and brain, the subtler processes of her thinking, and the dominant tenderness of her heart. Strength as contrasted with fineness is the essential meaning of "masculine," and is shown in his larger build,

his harder muscles, his larger grain, and in both his mental and emotional processes.

These are some of the likenesses and differences that mutually blending and interacting make up the full human being, and that furnish the ideal condition for friendship's sweet, strong life.

"Perfect Music Unto Noble Words."

It is most striking, and brings a fresh tinge of awe over one's spirit in thinking of the marvellous Jesus, to recall how his character blended, and blended perfectly, all of the essential traits that we class as masculine and feminine.

The strongest man is drawn irresistibly to Jesus as furnishing that ideal of manhood which he longs to attain. And the gentlest, womanliest woman finds herself as surely looking up to Him as embodying all that goes to make up her perfect womanhood. He was the ideal man because the likenesses and differences that mark man and woman blend in Him perfectly.

Is not this a bit of God's plan in the ideal friendship? that man and woman living together in the union of love shall each so absorb the life of the other, that each shall become a perfect human being, even while retaining the

distinctive traits; and that both together shall make the perfected human unit. This was Tennyson's thought as, with keen discrimination, he penned his exquisite lines in "The Princess."

"For woman is not undevelopt man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow;
The man be more of woman, she of man;
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words;
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time,
Sit side by side, full-summ'd in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other e'en as those who love.
Then comes the statelier Eden back to men:
Then reign the world's great bridals, chaste and calm:
Then springs the crowning race of humankind." [1]

Full growth of character requires two, two in one, that two who while distinct and separate are yet one. For character needs an atmosphere of *love* for its full growth; a free admiring, thoughtful love of which it is the absorbing

[1] Tennyson.

object and center. Only so can it grow into full size, and into that fineness of quality native to it. And character needs *to love* for its full growth, too. It needs an object that will draw out its love, and draw it out continually, and to the full; a love based upon respect and admiration. Man must love. We live only as we love.

> "Let us love, let us live,
> For the acts correspond."[1]

There must be some one upon whom we may lavish out freely and fully the love and devotion of the heart.

> "The night has a thousand eyes,
> And the day but one,
> Yet the light of the bright world dies
> With the dying sun.
>
> "The mind has a thousand eyes
> And the heart but one,
> Yet the light of a whole life dies
> When its love is done."

Humanity exists in duality. It takes two to make one. This is the higher arithmetic of human life. Each is but half, and when both halves come together, and then grow together, then is perfected the love-plan of God for each, and for both. When two such hearts find each other, and are joined together by the ordinance

[1] Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

of man, it is merely a ratifying of the act of God already done. The two are made one legally and technically when, by the wise and necessary provision of law, the words are spoken in the exchange of sacred vows, and in the sanction of clerical lips.

They were already one in heart when the holy flame of a discerning choosing love welded the two together. They become one in life, as through the years, with gracious steady self-discipline, they grow into oneness of purpose and habit and mutual attainments. It is not the oneness of subserviency, one yielding to the other; but of co-operation, each to the other; two strong, growing lives, each maturing fully in himself under the gracious influence of the other, and each fitting fully into the other.

"Even as Christ."

Now, of course, it is true that there is a teaching of the meaning of conjugal love quite different from all this. It is quite commonly said that the love between the sexes that leads to the life union, is not such a high unselfish thing as this. It is supposed to be the love that desires to have the other for its own possession and advantage and enjoyment. And in common experience this usually means that he is the one who possesses, and follows the bent of his de-

sires; and that she is the one who bends and yields to his desires. Here is a bit of that same thought of woman already spoken of that has kept her under the thumb of man's rule and desire and passion.

It is altogether likely that a good many won't agree with the way the thing is being put in these quiet talks, and will insist on so not agreeing. Yet will these friends kindly notice a thing that seems positively startling when put alongside of the common conception of the conjugal relation? It is something said by Paul. Aye, listen softly, it is something taught to Paul by the Spirit of his Master. Paul taught that a husband's love for his wife is to be the same as Christ's love for the Church.[1] This is putting the relation between the two on the purest, highest, holiest ground imaginable. There can be none higher. Brought into the atmosphere of life as it actually is this is nothing short of startling. The purity and unselfishness of Jesus' love for man has never been questioned. It has become the standard by which all loves are judged. At the utmost cost of pain, and the intensest tenderness of devotion, and the keenest self-remembering unselfishness, he lived for others, and then gave His life out for them.

And mark very keenly why He did this, as Paul puts it here: that He might present this

[1] Ephesians v:25-27.

body of redeemed, purified men to Himself. Ah! His love was a possessory love after all. Yes; but He wanted to possess them as His own for *their* sakes. His whole thought was of those for whom He gave His life. His love was wholly concerned for the other. Utterly unselfish, putting itself to the severest pain and discipline, with no thought of anything but the other one, this was Jesus' love. And this, we are taught, is to be the husband's love, and by inference the love of each for the other. In all his thought of his wife, and all his life with her, the husband is to be swayed and controlled by the same self-remembering unselfish love that swayed Jesus in the Nazareth home, the wood-working shop, and as He walked out of the Jerusalem gate toward the Calvary hill. This is *His* thought who planned this holy union of lives.

The Divine-Human Trinity.

There is a question that many a heart is asking just now as we talk together. It is this: how shall the two that belong together surely get together? There seems to be so many slips. There is so much that works persistently against this great ideal plan of God. Your heart says with a soft distinctness and a bit of a quiver in its eager beat: "How can I be sure to find my

other answering self?" Well, it's a great delight to tell you that there is a way; and a very simple way it is, and as sure as simple. It has never been known to fail yet.

You know some of the old German philosophers taught that perfect love requires three for its maturity. There need to be the two who belong together and are bound together in love; and then a third one who draws out to himself the love of each, and whose love is drawn out fully toward each. So their love for each other finds new expression, and so new strength, in this third one whom each loves so devotedly.

This is the picture the Old Book gives of God Himself. It is said that He exists in three, or, as three. By inference perfection of being exists only where three are perfectly joined in one. A touch of reverent awe must always linger in the thought that the nearest human likeness to God is that wondrous human trinity, father and mother and child. The two that are one because of love, with a third one who comes as a direct fruit and result of their mutual love.

It is this same thought that underlies the words we are taught to use for God, "Father," "Son," and "Spirit." These words themselves imply the Father-love bringing the Son, and these together bringing another, who is so perfectly one with them, that only the word "Spirit" can be

used for Him. He is the spirit of both Father and Son.

Now here seem to be the key to the true friendship, and the simple answer to your earnest question. The divine trinity is Father, Son, and Spirit. The ideal human trinity is father and mother and child. Now there is a link between these two, the divine-human trinity, a new trinity, through which there comes to be the distinctively human trinity. The man and woman who belong together, are drawn together by the third One, who is really the first One.

He made each. He made them to fit together as two halves of a perfect whole. Only He knows the secret of love by which two can be made one. It is only through Him that the human heart ever knows love. He draws out to Himself the love of each, to the full, as no human being ever can. He puts into each the great tender passion for the other, and the yet greater, and yet more tender passion for Himself.

Love is really a bit of Himself in them drawing them to Himself and to each other, even as the natural parts of any whole will come together when unhindered. This is the great trinity, the trinity of trinities. With deepest awe at the marvels of God's love for man, it can be truly said this is the one perfect trinity, the

divine-human trinity, the perfect union of God and man.

"Behold a Friend!"

You are asking, "How can I be *sure* of finding my other answering self? with more emphasis on that word "sure" than voice or underscoring of pen can tell. This is the simple way: let your first Friend, whose love for you sent Him up the Calvary steep, let Him have the utmost devotion of your heart without any reserve. Your heart belongs to Him. He longs for it. It won't be a heart really until it answers to His longing; for it acts its part as a heart only as it beats in full rhythm with His own.

Get into that rhythm. Make it full and strong. Let nothing break it, nor disturb a single one of its throbbing beats. That's the first thing; as simple as it can be. But it is absolutely *first*. There can be no second until there is a first. Please remember, we are not talking about being saved, nor about becoming a Christian; but just about how to find your other answering self. This is the one sure way. There is no second.

The next step in this way is this: ask your first Friend to bring your other self to you, and to bring you to your other self. Ask Him to make you ready for the other one. Ask Him to bring that other one into the same bond of

friendship with Himself that you are in. Ask Him to make the other ready for you. Ask simply, with the confident expectancy that *knows* the result. Keep asking, for it may take some time to work out the answer to these requests of yours.

It likely will. Maybe it'll take a good bit of time. It's quite apt to. You need changing quite likely, re-shaping and refining And that takes time. The other one does too, likely. The more you yield to your first Friend's touch daily, the surer and quicker will come the full answer to your prayer. Never think of being discouraged because you don't know as much as your eagerness covets.

Better, infinitely better, beyond all odds of comparison, to live alone with your ideal kept pure and strong in your heart, than ever to lose it, or to lower it by so much as the tenth part of a barleycorn's height. But then don't bother about that: you won't need to live alone.

> Be patient, as well as always true;
> And Nature, some sweet day,
> Will give to thee the lay
> That thy yearning heart thrills to.

In the sweet fullness of time your first Friend will bring your human friend and you together; and then the new heavens and the new earth will have come for you. Then you will sing:

"God never loved me in so sweet a way before;
'Tis He alone who can such blessing send.
For when His love would new expression find,
He brought thee to me, and said, 'Behold *a friend!*'"

And if you have reached over the line in your life where that question is being asked, because for you the sacred union has been made, maybe here is the simple pathway for you into yet more and better. Many a true union of hearts has been brought about by the first Friend, though His part was not recognized, or only thought of very vaguely. To recognize the part He has had in your happiness, and to let Him fully in now as first Friend to each and both, will bring yet greater sweets, and finer.

And—softly, very softly—if, maybe, sometimes in your heart you half wonder if you slipped a bit, just a little bit, back there in your choosing and deciding, and then quickly chide yourself for the unbidden thought and push it resolutely away, yet only to find it insistently using some door-crack to come in again—if so, or more than that maybe, remember, this same path will surely lead to two *new* hearts coming into a *new union* of hearts and lives. Yes, it is even so.

A Bit of Real Life.

Now, the best part of all this simple homely

talk about the finest friendship is yet to come. It is a story, a heart story, a simple bit out of real life. But it is of the sort that is sacred, because it has to do with the things of the innermost heart. Such things can be told only to a very very few, and then only in softest tones, and only at such times as the heart-mood, tender and soft, has sway. It is told here now only that others—answering hearts—may be helped a bit in waiting, and praying, and keeping true until the morning of their new day breaks up the east.

It is about the coming together of two whose lives have been joined for years now, while their hearts are growing more and more into one, as the ripening gray is coming. It is interesting to note that the woman's part of the story comes first. Into her heart there gradually came during her tender teens high ideals of life, and of its aims and personal relations. They came gradually, increasing in clearness of outline and in strength of conviction. She believed, and believes that they were put into her heart by no human thought or touch, but by Him whom she has long known as her first Friend.

By and by she was led to begin praying about the one life-friendship, which is ever the chief thing in the making of a life. The prayer took this simple shape: that God would bring to her the man of His choice for her; and that He

would be blessing and guarding him then wherever he was. That habit and undercurrent of praying went on steadily for nearly eight years, while she was busy with the duties of her daily life. There was no outer sign all those years that the answer was coming; but the ideals stood out more and more clearly, and the convictions struck their roots deeper into the sub-soil of her life, as she keenly observed the habit of life round about, and quietly believed and prayed on.

Then there began to come premonitions, spirit-suggestions, that the answer was coming, and was near at hand. There still lingers a great touch of tender awe over that wondrous group of simple spirit-indications that came, scattered through several months. They may not be put on paper, but only told, at rare intervals, as one tells a thing of the heart, in the twilight-glow of an open fire, and in the hushed yet eager voice of one who feels the tender presence of the Master's own wondrous self.

In the stillness of her inner soul came again and again the soundless but distinct voice, telling of *his* coming who was yet unseen and unknown. And sometimes he seemed brought into her presence for a moment's clear, unforgetable look into his face and eyes. But even soft spoken words can't tell the quiet spell that held her spirit in its gentle thrall at those times. It was when the year was at the spring, that these

buddings of the springtime of her new life were coming.

The calendar shows that his story begins after the beginning of hers. During the first three years, and a little more, of her praying, a change was gradually coming in his inner life. There came a distinct spirit-crisis which made a radical change in him, and has affected his whole life since. As the new adjustment of his life and plans came he began praying daily that God would choose for him his life-friend, and bring them together, and that He would be blessing and shaping her character day by day.

Each was praying exactly the same, though all unknown to the other. They think this points unmistakably to a common source of the two prayers. And his praying continued daily for four years and a half, while his eyes reverently looked, and his heart sometimes wondered where she was, and his habit of caution held him steadily to his knees that no mistake might be made.

Then they met. Their homes were hundreds of miles apart. It would certainly seem that in the ordinary course of life they would not have met. But the invisible hand was steadily at work. Unexpected circumstances took each hundreds of miles away from home to the place of meeting. Unknown and still unexplained difficulties, in apparently trifling matters, which would have prevented one of the journeys were

overcome. They met. The circumstances of the meeting were peculiarly adapted to his revealing his whole inner self to her, though unconsciously to himself. The first decision was to be hers.

Then came the recognition, and then the mellowing and deepening of acquaintance into the holiest of all emotions that can grip and sway the human heart. The union of hearts was complete. Then came the union of lives. And now years have gone by. They have been full of the common experiences of life; for these two have had their full share of hard work.

Problems and suffering have played their full part; but there has been a deep unfailing peace, and an ecstatic joy in the midst of these ripening experiences. And they insist on saying that their life is just at the spring, the maturing spring of June. Their calendar is kept open at June. May many another follow them into the same simple path they found, where a Friend is waiting to lead into this new Eden of God.

HOME: WHERE LOVE REIGNS, AND TRAINS.

"Love, and the Smiling Face of Her."
The Birthplace of Institutions.
The Genius of Home.
The Holy of Holies.
The Nursery of Full-Grown Souls.
The Birth of a Home.
The Meaning of Love.
The Real Test.
The Nazareth Home.

"A spirit dwells by the fireside
When the patter of falling rain
Trembles the leaves of the drooping trees
And drips on the window pane.
O, cold and gray is the world outside,
When the heav'ns grow dark above,
But within, within, at the glowing hearth
Is the tender spirit of love!

"Our genius there at the fireside
Whispers a thousand things.
'O, life is drear and the world is wide,
But a brave heart soars and sings!
Tho' clouds draw round and storms betide,
Within that heart hope springs,
And here pure Faith all else beside,
Around it twines and clings!'

"O, precious voice of the fireside!
Sweet spirit of calm and cheer!
Tho' the wild wind roars o'er the pathless wastes,
What matter, so thou art near?
Thy voice ne'er stills tho' the years go on,
When the patter of falling rain
Drips from the eaves and trembles the leaves
And rattles the window pane.
Holy and sacred the voice of home,
It steals to our hearts again."

Beatrice Clayton.

HOME.

"Love, and the Smiling Face of Her."

Home is the holy of holies of a man's life. There he withdraws from all the world, and, shutting his door, is alone with those who are his own. It is the reservoir of his strength, the restorer of his energies, the resting place from his toil, the brooding place for his spirit, the inspiration for all his activities and battles.

Home is where love lives. Not where it boards, nor pays occasional visits, even long visits, nor even where it may be a sort of permanent guest, with familiar access to certain rooms and cozy corners. But where it owns the front-door key, sits by the glow of a hearth-fire of its own kindling, and pervades the whole house with its presence. It may be a king's spacious, luxurious palace. It may be the poor man's narrow-walled cottage, or anywhere in between these two extremes.

The palace cannot make the home, nor yet mar it. The simplicity and spareness of the cottage

do not bring the home, and neither can they hinder nor disturb it.

There may be present the evidences of wealth and culture and of the sort of refinement that these give, and even the higher refinement they can't give, and yet the place not be a home. And there may be the absence of all this, except that real refinement that love always breeds, and yet there be a home in the sweet, strong meaning of that word.

The first home was in a garden. It was planned so. The freshness and fragrance of the garden filled the home. The wholesome sweetness of nature was the only air breathed. And the garden has never left the home. That first joining together has never been put asunder. Even in the city, where the blueness of the sky, the smile of the stars, and the freshness of real air, are almost forgotten, even there remnants of the garden still cling. Very raggedy remnants they are sometimes, scarcely-seen grass-spots upon which the foot is sternly forbidden to go, yet remnants of the original Eden plan. There is always a bit of Eden left, even in the city.

Home things tangle and twine themselves close and clinging about the heart, until the tendrils are unable to unclasp their fingers. To the outside man a chair may be just a chair, one of a thousand; but to you it has a caressing

voice, that speaks to your heart of memories and faces and experiences woven inextricably into the fabric of your life.

Home things to eat have a fine flavor all their own, that can't be imitated by any Parisian chef. Everybody who ever had a home, a real home with a garden, knows that a potato served in a hotel, even a fine hotel, has no such taste as the one your own hands have planted, and "worked" and dug up, and that has been cooked and served by hands that love you and that you love.

It is an exquisite picture, in its homely simplicity, and its heart-touches, that James Whitcomb Riley draws for us from the prayer of the London shopkeeper, and angler and author, Isaak Walton:

"I crave, dear Lord,
No boundless hoard
Of gold and gear,
Nor jewels fine,
Nor lands, nor kine,
Nor treasure heaps of anything—
Let but a little hut be mine
Where at the hearthstone I may hear
The cricket sing,
And have the shine
Of one glad woman's eyes to make,
For my poor sake,
Our simple home a place divine—
Just the wee cot—the cricket's chirr—
Love, and the smiling face of her.

"I pray not for
Great riches, nor
For vast estates, and castle halls—
Give me to hear the bare footfalls
Of children o'er
An oaken floor,
New-rinsed with sunshine, or bespread
With but the tiny coverlet
And pillow for the baby's head;
And pray Thou, may
The door stand open and the day
Send ever in a gentle breeze
With fragrance from the locust trees,
And drowsy moan of doves, and blur
Of robin chirps and drone of bees,
With afterhushes of the stir
Of intermingling sounds, and then
The good wife and the smile of her.
Filling the silences again—
The cricket's call
And the wee cot,
Dear Lord of all,
Deny me not!

"I pray not that
Men tremble at
My power of place
And lordly sway—
I only pray for simple grace
To look my neighbor in the face
Full honestly from day to day—
Yield me his horny palm to hold
And I'll not pray
For gold;
The tanned face, garlanded with mirth,
It hath the kingliest smile on earth—

The swart brow, diamonded with sweat,
Hath never need of coronet;
And so I reach,
Dear Lord, to Thee,
And do beseech
Thou givest me
The wee cot and the cricket's chirr,
Love, and the glad sweet face of her!"

The Birthplace of Institutions.

All life is in debt to the home. The beginnings of every honored institution have been in the home. Every valued form of activity may be traced to its source within these hallowed walls. Here the seed of every bit and kind of human organization has first sprung up into strong life.

From the earliest day the home was the center of worship. The father was priest and minister as well as father. He stood for God in his household, and led his family in their worship and religious observances. The church began here, using that word in its broadest meaning, for a group of people gathered for the worship of God. Among great multitudes the home is still the center of worship, whatever form the religious observance may take. The church of to-day might well be studying afresh the early home models in planning its service of worship.

All the roots of state and civil government

run down and back into the home. This is a highly centralized government, too. It has more paternalism than any national government to-day. Again the father, as head of the family, is the center of law and of authority. Ideally both father and mother together make the central authority, and it is interesting to observe how far that has always been and is true in practical administration. The mother is even more than the father, playing the larger part in teaching the law of the home, and insisting upon obedience, and in tempering the administration of that law in the little realm of the home.

It is intensely interesting to note that government, as it began in the home, and as it still finds its truest, strongest type there, is highly autocratic. There is no appeal from the decision of the head. But, mark keenly, that ideally, and in good measure practically, it is an autocracy of love. The autocrat is a father, with the best meaning that word may have. And this father-autocrat is under the sway of a friend, with the sweetest meaning that word may have; and he is under the sway, too, of a mother, with the tender meaning that word ever has.

And yet in this highly centralized autocracy representative government had its birth, too. The seeds of purest democracy are here. But it is a democracy blending with autocracy in a manner that would be an utter astonishment to

statesmen if suggested as a possible thing in civil government to-day. Governments might well study more closely the old home models whence they spring. The true home spirit must get into our civic institutions if they are to fulfill their mission, and to abide.

The whole school scheme began in the home, from the primary grades up to the university post-graduate work. And no finer school work has ever been done than in the original home university. Its graduates have gone out into every activity of life, and brought honor upon their Alma Mater. It is co-educational in form, with all the advantages of the sexes mingling, each being helped by the distinctive traits of the other. But it is in the atmosphere of accepted authority, and of the unconscious reverence of childhood, and amid the natural restraints of surroundings such as can only be approximated outside of the home.

There began the ideal schooling, with carefully graduated courses, gentle but firm discipline, and with the tender personal relation between teacher and student that lies at the very root of the best character-building. Much of the very language of college life, about which so many tender memories cling, grew up out of the home. "*Alma mater,*" the fostering, feeding mother, and "*alumnus,*" one nursed and fostered, breath out all afresh the fragrance of

the tenderest memories of early life. The school that can come nearest to reproducing the spirit of the early home-university will be strongest in character-building, the chief purpose of all school work.

The broad and deep mental culture represented by the library is a bit of the genius of true home life. The little collection of books on the home-made shelves, hard purchased from scanty funds, carefully selected, and jealously guarded, and eagerly pored over, was the foundation of all the great libraries. And many of the larger collections, worthily called libraries, have been, and still are, pretty much home affairs. The readily accessible public library is a comparatively recent addition to modern life.

No finer library work was ever done than in countless numbers of these scanty home libraries with their few old classics. The work was intensive, by force of circumstances, rather than extensive or scattered. What little was there went in deep, and struck its roots into the vitals. The cheap newspaper and magazine had not yet come to make shallow reading and shallower thinking. For so many have not learned the secret of a wise reading of the invaluable newspaper and magazine.

Foundations of great mental power and of great character were laid in the little corner library of the home, such as many, maybe most,

great libraries with all their wealth and their invaluable service to men, are utter strangers to. The lean, lank Lincoln boy, lying prone in the light of his pitch-pine fire, conning over English Bible, and Shakespeare, and Bunyan, is typical of the best work of the narrow home collection; and typical, too, of the genius of home, which makes for mental and moral strength and discipline.

And the literary society, with its rare opportunity for the helpful warming friction of congenial minds, began in the evening family group; and in the larger, yet small, group of spirits akin in their mind-hunger, gathering about the hearth-fire. Some literary societies might be improved by a return to that hearth fire.

The earliest hospital was in the home. And the true home atmosphere has never been improved upon, nor approached, in the splendidly equipped hospitals that dot the earth over, with their gracious skilled ministry of brain and hand. Nursing, which with the utmost that the wise physician can do, means so much more than his skill can bring,—nursing finds its finest adepts within home walls.

With the best that recent science has taught at hand, and wisely used, here is the best of nurses' training schools. And, with all due regard for the hospital and sanitarium, they can't approach the psychological power of the atmos-

phere of the well-regulated home in working cures. And the physicians are laying more and more stress on the psychological in doing cures. The mind can doctor the body better than any other.

And, of course, the beginning of all manufacturing and deft hand-working was in the home. The greatest manufacturing plants owe their existence to the simple home beginnings. And in all corners of the earth the home still includes the humble workshop, with the skilled hand-worker. And the home factory has not been improved upon for fineness of workmanship. Nor has it been approached for the symmetry of physical and mental development, and for the character-building that rightly belong to manual labor.

The modern factory can make more money for the owners, but has lost in the genius that home put into its beginnings, though an earnest, belated effort is being made to get back. It's a poor home that has lost the spirit of the little old home workshop, and some remnant of the shop itself for its boys and girls.

It may disturb some to remember that the beginnings of army and navy can be traced directly to the hearth-fire. Yet, of course, it is so. The strong father, with his sturdy sons, planning the protection of their home, either inland or down by the sea, from the enemy; several such

groups, gathered in the home of the leader, to guard their little community against the common danger—such was the beginning of all army and navy organization.

How blessedly different history would have been if the evil spirit of restless ambition and aggression had never eaten its canker way into such simple sufficient organization. The home contains the genius of the only army and navy organization ever needed, with the only purpose ever permissible, the protection of home interests.

And it may be a bit startling, too, to recall that the modern social club was originally a home affair, though it would seem, in quite a few cases, to have become a prodigal. No social gathering, or place of social resort or retreat, can equal the old home circle, with a few choice friends in, for a bit of tea and a bite of bread, and the exchange of the small courtesies and warmths of life. The break-up of homes and of the home spirit, and the growth of the club, in some form or other, seem to have gone hand-in-hand. If the modern clubs, which have a place to fill in our highly organized city life, could retain more,—or would it better be said "some"?—of the old home atmosphere of simplicity and purity and high ideals, they would better fulfill their mission among the thousands of homeless city dwellers.

The home still remains the center of the social exchanges and functions of modern life. This child has not gone away like the others. Yet one cannot help thinking it has played the prodigal quite a bit to the early simple home ideals.

The first art gallery was in a home. And the home galleries still contain many of the choicest products of brush and chisel and needle. The natural yearning after the ideal as expressed in picture, and stone, and cunningly woven or worked fabrics, is never wholly lost. What home is there, however humble, that has not its bit of idealized face or scene, even though it be only a cheap reprint? The art gallery, and the pictured representation of life, are but mute expressions of the hunger of the human heart for the ideal in life.

And that weird wizard of modern life, organization, which plays the witch in its almost magical power and transformations, found its first expression in the home. The home was the earliest and simplest and yet most perfect form of organization. The very genius of the spirit of organization is found in its highest perfection in the typical home. Here is highly centralized authority, a natural scheme into which all activity fits its adjusted parts, distinctive work for each, responsibility of each and all to the one head, and in and through all a passion of warm,

eager loyalty to the home and its head. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the world's life has never known such perfection of organization, and such stupendous achievements of organization, as in our day. And we do well to remind ourselves all anew that it all grew up out of the home.

The Genius of Home.

Surely the world owes a great debt to the home. Yet the true home spirit and ideals were never more in danger of being swept completely away. The only adequate way of paying up, in this case, will be by a restoration of the early home with its simple, pure, strong ideals. The home is not only the first member of the national family historically, but is still first in importance. This first-born must still have the birth-right place and portion if the family is to prosper. All the roots of these things named still run down here for their sustenance.

A weakened home means a weakened people. It should be keenly noted that nothing else, absolutely nothing else, can take its place. A weakened home means a weakened church. It puts a greater task upon the educational institutions; and yet, however strong and able, these can never do the home's work. It means lowered standards in business, and in political and in social

life. Students of present-day conditions in church and national and business life would better dig their investigating spades a bit deeper down into the sub-soil.

A father and mother living together with their children, tender in their love, pure in their lives, strong in their convictions, simple and orderly in their habits, do infinitely more than presidents and governors, legislators, educators and clergymen can do in making a strong nation. And that is a "more" that can be replaced by nothing else. True strength can come to a nation only as the genius of the home pervades the whole inner life of the people.

The home nations are the most enduring nations. The secret of the most remarkable length of life of China as a nation must be found here. We Westerners may not think highly of their ideals. But the fact remains that where other nations have come, and shown great vitality, and done great deeds, and then vanished, leaving only ragged remnants behind, to mark the spot where once they lived, this nation of the Orient is hoary white with the years, and seems as strong as ever in its mere power to defy the wasting hand of time. Nowhere has the family so strong a hold in the national life. Nowhere do its ties bind so tightly. It seems to us to be carried to such an extreme as to be oftentimes a hindering instead of a help. But that need not keep

us from seeing that in the sacred guarding of the family unit lies national stability.

And, it should be keenly noted on the other hand, that the home can be true to its own spirit and genius only as it retains and brings out into full strength these early ideals. The simple altar of worship with its recognition of the Heavenly Father's hallowed and hallowing presence, the fine reverence for authority, and the mental and moral training and discipline which enter so potently into character-building,—these belong to the very genius of home. Without them there may be an inhabited house, but not a home.

The broader culture and thoughtful study of life's problems; the dignity of labor, with the training of brain and hand together; the co-operative principle practically applied in the doing of life's work, so invaluable in the training of boys and girls as well as with the mature;—these as truly belong to the home, and vastly enrich its living wealth, and immensely increase its power. And the spirit of devoted mutual loyalty to the home group, and of giving strength out for its protection from all intruders; the rest and help of social warmth and fellowship and inspiration; these should be jealously nurtured and guarded that they may grow strong, and not be stolen away by the sneak thieves of modern life.

The Holy of Holies.

But however much the home may have done in enriching the institutions and life of society, and however great may be its importance to the nation, its deepest significance lies in its personal meaning. Its sweets and wealth, and finest flavor and fragrance, are not for the nation, but for those whose personal life centers there. The effects upon the nation are indispensably vital. Yet they seem really incidental when compared with the effect in the individual life. Of course, the two are inextricably intermingled, for the individual makes the nation.

The home is the holy of holies of a man's life. There he may shut himself in from all the world. There he comes in from the cold and strength-sapping strife and work of the outer world. He warms himself at love's fires. He renews his strength in love's atmosphere. He rests both spirit and body in love's faith and confidences. It is his starting-point out on his errands in the world, and his returning and retiring place for the nourishing of his life afresh.

It is of keen interest to note that, while in most languages the word for "home" means a place, or a group of places, or a village; in the Dutch of the Hollanders, sister language to our own, the word used has, in some of its forms, the meaning of "private," "secret." It penetrates

into the house after the purpose and power that are inside. It is suggestive to us Americans, who have gotten so much from brave Holland in national ideals and organization, that this little land of homes, with its home-loving queen herself nursing her babe these days, should have so much of the inner finer meaning of home imbedded in its language. And hoary-headed old Sanskrit, mother to so many of our languages, has in its word for home the meaning of "place of rest," "security."

The word home is commonly used merely for a place. The house in which a family lives is called a home. But we want to remember the finer meaning of the word, and to add to its fineness by the emphasis of our own life. It is true that home is a place. The place is essential to the home. But it is a sad loss when the thought of place tells all of the meaning the word may have to some. A house, with people living in it, who are kin to each by the accident of birth—that is all the word seems to mean sometimes. And there is a strong swirl of the wind in to-day's life that acts like suction upon the home, sucking out the sweet, rich heart, and leaving only the outer shell, the place.

But home is more than a place. It is an ideal; and more yet, an ideal being worked out, in varying degree, into the real. It was surely more

than a place to the little child of whom this story is told:

"I found her on the corner,
A maid of three short years;
Her head a mass of tangled curls,
Her blue eyes filled with tears.
'Where do you live, my little maid?
I fear you've wandered far—'
She looked at me and, sobbing, said,
'I live with my Mama."

"I took her in my arms and tried
To soothe her childish woe.
'But where does Mama live?' I asked.
'Perhaps the street you know?'
She gazed at me—no sorrow now
The childish face did mar—
'Why, don't you know?' she wondering said,
'She lives with my Papa!'

"'Oh, little maid! Oh, little maid!'
I cried in my despair.
'Your Mama lives with your Papa,
And they both live—pray, where?'
She tossed the mass of tangled curls
And laughed aloud with glee—
'My Mama lives with my Papa,
And they both live with me!'"[1]

That home is an ideal, and a very sweet one, was unconsciously revealed by the little maid's artless replies.

[1] M. N. S., in *Little Folks' Magazine.*

Home is an atmosphere that pervades the whole spirit of a man's life, even as the outer atmosphere fills his lungs, and affects his blood, and his whole physical life. Home is where love lives, and reigns, and trains. It is the outer abiding-place of the finest friendship. The mellowing, enriching, resting, inspiring influence of love is felt from cellar to garret, even as the fragrance of new-blown locust blossoms will fill a room.

The Nursery of Full-grown Souls.

Home means privacy. There a man may shut himself in, and shut the crowd out; and that is a great essential to the making of deep, strong life. There is a stubborn tendency in present-day life to rob us of privacy; to steal away the quiet corner where in silence one may sit and commune with his own spirit, and listen to the voice of God within his soul. There can be no strong life without privacy.

> "If chosen men could never be,
> In deep mid-silence open-browed to God,
> No greatness ever had been dreamed or done."

Privacy is the schoolroom of character. In the crowd and street character must live, and be put to the test, and develop its strength, but

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the solitude of the inner chamber is where it is made, and made deep.

"The nurse of full-grown souls is solitude." The home is the nursery of character; not merely for the children, but for the mature as well. No man can be strong, and no woman can come into her full birthright of sweet potency, without that privacy for which home stands peculiarly.

And home means rest. When one is tugging away, sore in muscle, or in brain, or maybe in heart, his thought turns unbidden to the quitting hour, and the home spot where rest may come. And resting is one of the absolute essentials of strength, and of strong character. There is a good tiredness, which brings good sleep, and which leaves in sleep. But excessive fatigue is a subtle foe, to be earnestly fought. We should fight it for character's sake. Fatigue is a terrible demoralizer. Countless temptations are yielded to because the body is all tired out. Many a sadly blighted life turned the down-corner at the point of bodily exhaustion.

We need the home for rest. And the home should be kept sacred to its mission of rest. It is not simply the rest of quitting at six in the evening, and not needing to begin again until seven or eight the next morning; but the rest of readjustment of spirit, the rest of sweet harmony.

"Rest is not quitting
The busy career;
Rest is the fitting
Of self to its sphere.

"'Tis the brook's motion,
Clear without strife,
Fleeing to ocean
After its life.

"Deeper devotion
Nowhere hath knelt;
Fuller emotion
Heart never felt.

"'Tis loving and serving
The highest and best!
'Tis onward! Unswerving—
And that is true rest."[1]

And home means faith, sweet mutual confiding. It means a trust that never questions, even half-unconsciously in the inner secret of the heart, regarding anything. This is not leaving behind the thought of home being rest. It is simply emphasizing and intensifying it yet more. There is no rest equal to that of being with the one whom you trust absolutely, and who unquestioningly trusts you. That is the secret of real rest, and of the new inspiration that rest brings.

[1] John Sullivan Dwight.

"In love, if love be love, if love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers;
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

"It is the rift within the lute
That, by and by, will make the music mute,
And, ever widening, slowly silence all:

"The little rift within the lover's lute,
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That, rotting inward, slowly moulders all.

"It is not worth the keeping: let it go!
But shall it? Answer, darling, answer No!
And trust me not at all, or all in all." [1]

It is in such a home that fine-grained strength grows up to the full. That word strength needs a frequent re-telling of its meaning. It means not simply power to do, though that is thought of more than anything else in speaking of strength. But there's a greater test, and a greater revealing, of strength than that. There is the greater strength that can patiently endure, and do it serenely. The strength of not-doing, and not-speaking, when that is the thing most needed, though all the tendency and temptation are to a spilling out at lip and hand, is infinitely more than the strength of action.

It takes the greatest strength to speak quietly. It takes rarely disciplined strength to bring the softest music out of organ or piano. It is quite

[1] Tennyson.

likely that, speaking offhand, one would say that the eagle is the most powerful of all flying birds. And yet a little thought and reading bring to mind the fact that, though actually so powerful, its relative strength is really inferior to that of the humming-bird. This smallest of birds can perform a feat of strength quite impossible to the powerful eagle. It holds itself steadily poised in mid-air as it quietly sips its honey-food from the hanging flower. Its very calmness and steadiness and delicacy of action reveal the superbness of its strength.

The strength that reveals itself most in gentleness and tenderness and keenly alert patience; in subdued tone, and soft touch, and quiet step, is the real, strong strength that wins the hardest fight It is a native product of the home. And the true home is constantly growing it, and growing it into ever new depth and fineness.

The Birth of a Home.

The real genius of the home spirit, the love spirit, is shown in every new home-birth. The making of the home always has in it the element of sacrifice and of pain. Therein lies the secret of its astonishing vitality. It comes into being only by the transfusion of rich, ripe, human blood. Love is the corner-stone of the home; and that stone can be set securely in place only

in red mortar. The crisis of a human birth always means pain, a pain mingled with greatest joy and quite overborne by the joy, and yet a real, biting pain.

The birth of a home means the same undercutting of secret pain in the midst of music and rejoicing. For two other homes give out of their life that this new home may come into its life. Some mother has parted with her son, that another woman may have him all to herself. She gave her own very life that life might come to him. He is a bit of her life, and a big bit of her heart. For long years she was the one woman of all the world to him. Now, it is a bit of his maturing life, in which his mother rejoices, and which is a crowning of her years of toil, that another woman comes to occupy the inner chamber of his heart where once she reigned as queen.

And while she rejoices with great gladness over his joy, and over the new higher life awaiting him, there is the secret tear that will steal its way down her cheek. Yet the minor is the sweetest music. It has more of the heart in it. No music is perfect, or is true in its answering rhythm to the human heart that has no minor strain in its undertone.

And yet that's only half the story. Some father has had the experience of having another man come in and take that first place in his

daughter's heart that he has had all her life. She had, time and again, taken his heart by storm all anew, as perchance he had seen the marvel of his own early love reproduced in her face and spirit. He has given the best of his life-strength through years and hard struggles, for her, and of the strength of his presence to her. He has been the one man among men to her through those growing years. And if he has done well his part as father, he has held that place through all those years.

Now another quietly steps in past him into that one place. And he rejoices that it is so, for it spells out the perfecting of life's character and joys and mission for her. But the form of the man stepping in past him casts a shadow over his own path. Yet he knows it is well, and right. For there must needs be shade as well as sun to make a perfect day. Every home has its birth in thoughtful, sacrificial love.

The Meaning of Love.

And that same sacrificial love is the secret of making a home true; and of holding it true; and of bringing it back again if it have been playing the prodigal. Archbishop Trench's fine lines can be made as true in the home, as for the world he was thinking of, in penning them:

"I say to thee, do thou repeat,
To the first man thou mayst meet,
In highway, lane, or open street,
That he and I and all men move
Under a canopy of love
As broad as God's blue heaven above."

Four simple letters of our alphabet, l-o-v-e, tell the one great secret of home making. But all the letters of all the alphabets can't begin to tell all the syllables and words and sentences and paragraphs and chapters and books and libraries of the real thing of love itself. Love means more than loving; that is, more than tender heart, and endearing word, and fond caress. If it be a sufficient telling of what God is to say that He is "love," then that word must mean far more than we have been reading out of it, even in our most thoughtful moods. It must mean purity and wisdom as well as the quickly-thought-of heart-meaning.

That love is to take in all the "heart" and "soul" and "strength" and "mind," as quoted to Jesus from Moses by the inquiring lawyer, suggests strongly that it sweeps in the whole nature of man. The act of love and the life of love must involve not merely the emotional powers, but the keen, wise discipline and use of the mental powers, the strength of the bodily powers, and the very life-principle itself.

Clearly love must mean purity for the loved one's sake.

Jesus giving the strength of His thought to thinking through man's needs and disposition, and deciding that dying was the wisest way of winning him,—that was loving man with all His mind. Jesus suffering severest bodily pain on the Cross,—that was loving man with all His strength. Jesus coming down among men to live their life with them through the years,—that was loving man with all his soul or life. And the great heart-love was the secret spring back of all else.

Love means all the powers of one's being disciplined, and devoted in all their keenness and strength and maturity, to the one loved, and that, too, through all the long years until the web of life is fully woven. This is God's secret of life. And this is the one secret of the true home. Such love shows itself, not only in the gripping, driving purpose, but in a thousand little ways It will be felt in all the planning, in money affairs, in the punctual fitting into the home schedule, in thoughtfulness about little things, in word, and act, and look, and very presence.

"True love is but a humble, low born thing
And hath its food served up in earthenware;
It is a thing to walk with, hand in hand,
Through the everydayness of this work-day world,

A love that gives and takes,
Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle points,
But, loving kindly, ever looks them down.
A love that shall be new and fresh each hour." [1]

The critical spirit won't be able to breath comfortably in that atmosphere. Love sees. It isn't blind. But it thinks, too, and remembers that life is a school, and that a patient word, and a warm hand help much when a tugging load is wearing the spirit sore, and maybe disturbing the control of the tongue a trifle.

"So many little faults we find:
We see them; for not blind is love.
We see them, but if you and I
Perhaps remember them in some bye and bye,
They will not be faults then, grave faults, for you and me,
But just, odd ways;
Mistakes, or, even less,
Remembrances to bless.
Days change so many things, yes hours;
We see so differently in suns and showers;
Mistaken words to-night,
May be so cherished by to-morrow's light.
We may be patient, for we know
There's such a little way to go."

The Real Test.

The home is the impress of the character of those living there. Or, it could be put better

[1] James Russell Lowell.

by saying, the impress of the one in the home who dominates it. You press your thumb firmly down on a lump of moist clay, and as you lift it away, the clay contains a faithful imprint of the thumb; both the whole face of the thumb, and every line are plainly indented there. Just so the home is the impress of those living there; and particularly of the one who is the dominant character there. Usually that is the mother. More rarely it is the father, who, maybe half-unconsciously, dominates the mother, and through her the home. Sometimes it is an older daughter; more rarely a son; sometimes some other one.

It is an impression given unconsciously. It is given by what we are The way to make a home what it should be is, first of all, for the home-maker to be that in himself. If a home is to be pure in its life, strong in its purpose, orderly in its arrangement, rhythmic in its habit, restful in its spirit, inspiring in its uplift, the dominating personality of the home must be all of that in himself. The home can never be more than its maker; and it never will be less. You don't really know a man or woman until you know his home, for it is the impress of him. What it is, he is. He must be brought to this standard to have his real character known.

The real test of a man's life is his home life. It is not in what his lips say, nor in what his church profession may be, but in what he is, and

in what he is in the one place where his life comes out most plainly, the home. If there be a seamy side, it will surely stick uglily out here. If there be a sweet masterful keeping of the seams out of existence, so far as the eyes can see, it will be felt here. Character is not revealed best by public service, nor church activities, nor the righting of public evils, invaluable as all of this is. The real man may be found only at home. You don't know a man's character until you know his home life.

A Scottish missionary, home on furlough from her work in India, told this story. She had been teaching a group of children one day, telling them the story of Jesus, bringing out, bit by bit, incidents showing His character. As she was talking one child, listening intently, grew excited, and then more excited. At last she was unable to restrain herself, and blurted eagerly out: "I know him; *he lives near us.*"

Was there ever such praise of a human? Have any of us ever been taken or mistaken for Jesus? When the homefolks begin to wonder in their secret hearts if it can possibly be that Jesus is back, living in you, in disguise, the sweetest victory of His grace will be told.

The Nazareth Home.

And, if, maybe, some kind matter-of-fact friend

thinks all this sort of talk sounds very nice, but is idealizing home clear out of all practical reach —you listen to this, and listen with your heart: there was a Nazareth home! There was a Jesus home in little hilly Nazareth.

Nazareth has not had the place in the heart of the Church that rightly belongs to it. Bethlehem, the place of His birth, has been immortalized in song and speech and art, and none too much. Galilee's hills and plains and blue lake have loomed up large as we follow Jesus' tireless work among the crowds. The Jordan, and Judea, and Jerusalem, play a big part in our thought of that incessant going about doing good. The Transfiguration Mount, and Gethsemane's olive grove just over the Creek of the Cedars, have figured in big, too.

To the great crowd in every generation and clime, Calvary has overtopped every other hill, and stands out tallest of all. But the little hill village of Nazareth has played but a very humble part. Yet Nazareth stands peculiarly for Jesus' everyday life, His home life, lived amid commonplace circumstances for nearly the whole of his years.

Jesus lived what He taught, and lived it first, and lived it more. That is to say, there was always more that He had lived than He taught. His teaching was sublime. It has awakened the admiration of believer and skeptic alike. Its

freshness never fails. But He had woven into the fabric of actual life far more of the truth He was speaking than could possibly get out of His lips. And this doesn't mean those three public years merely; it means rather the far longer home life in Nazareth that lay behind and back of those few public years; and which were now incarnated in His person. While His lips were speaking that life was speaking yet more. His pure quiet life in Nazareth was the greatest fact in His whole great career. It was this life that gave significance to His death.

Nazareth stands for the home life. It contains the greater part of His great career. By far the greater number of years was spent here. Here were more praying for others and over the life plan, more communing with the Father, more battling with temptation, and narrow prejudice, and ignorance, than in the few years of public service. Here were more purity of life, and steadiness of purpose, more wisdom in action and patience in touch with others and with the knotty little problems of daily life, more of all this being lived than could ever find outlet at His lips.

Nazareth stands for that intensely human life of Jesus lived in dependence upon God's grace exactly as other men must live. It was lived in a simple home that would seem very narrow and meager in its appointments and conveniences

to most of us. He was one of a large family living in a small house, with the touch of elbows very close, and with all the possible, small, half-good-natured frictions that such close, almost crowded, touch is apt to give rise to.

He worked with His hands and bodily strength most of the waking hours, doing carpentering jobs for the small trade of the village, dealing with exacting, whimsical customers, as well as those more easily suited.

He was a son to His mother, an eldest son, too, and maybe, rather likely, of a widowed mother, who leaned upon her first-born in piecing out the small funds, and in the ceaseless care of the younger children. He was a brother to His brothers and sisters, a real brother, the big brother of the little group. He was a neighbor to His fellow villagers, and a fellow laborer with the other craftsmen. In the midst of the little but very real and pressing problems of home, the small talk and interests of the village life, He grew up, a perfect bit of His surroundings, and lived during His matured years.

And who can doubt the simplicity and warmth and practicality and unfailingness of His love as it was lived in that great Nazareth life. We will never know the full meaning of Jesus' word "pure," and of His word "love," and of all His teaching, until we know His Nazareth life. The more we can think into what it really was, the

better can we grasp the meaning of His public utterances. Nazareth is the double underscoring in red under every sentence He spoke.

Those three years and odd, of public life all grew up out of this Nazareth home life. They are the top of the hill; Nazareth is the base and bulk; Calvary the tip-top. Here every victory had already been won. The public life was built upon the home life. Under the ministering to crowds, healing the sick, raising the dead, and patient teaching of the multitudes, lay the great strong home life in its purity. Calvary was built upon Nazareth.

Jesus was, before He did, and before He died. He lived what He taught, and lived it before He taught it, and lived it far more than He could teach it. The greatness of His sacrifice for sin on Calvary lay in the matchless purity, the rugged strength and trueness to ideals of His home life. It was the quality of the life poured out so freely on Calvary that gives the wondrous meaning to His death.

The ideal home life, bathed in the fine ether of love, is a real life. It has been lived. Jesus lived it. Others have in His strength. We can; and—please God—we will.

THE FINEST FRIENDSHIP'S FINEST FRUIT: IN THE INNERMOST HOLY OF HOLIES.

The Heart Mood.

"The Place Whereon Thou Standest is Holy Ground."

Fellow-workers with God.

"More of Reverence."

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,

"But vaster. We are fools and slight;
We mock thee when we do not fear."

Tennyson.

THE FINEST FRIENDSHIP'S FINEST FRUIT.

The Heart Mood.

Have you noticed how much of the meaning of a spoken word depends upon the tone of the voice that speaks it? And upon the expression of the face as it is spoken? and especially upon the light in the eye? and upon the expression on the face of the spirit looking at you out of the eye?

You read the word "love" on a printed page, and it carries a certain meaning to your mind, depending entirely on what your personal contacts with others have made it mean. But one day you are talking with someone, whose life seems deeper and fuller of meaning to you, than you have been able to grasp or fathom so far. And in the conversation he repeats that word "love" in one of his remarks. And you are caught at once with how he says it. There is a hallowed touch of awe in his tone, as though he felt a something in the word that stilled and thralled his spirit. There is a caressing linger-

ing of the lip over the word, as though reluctant to part with it.

You look into his face and there's a light there, a sort of subdued radiance, as if something within, a bit of the thing he is talking about, you think perhaps, is shining out through his face upon you. There is a new subtly subdued firelight in his eye. Yet you can only see it partly, for his eyelids, those window-shades of the soul, are partly dropped or drooped, as though the wondrous vision within of what that spoken word means, and the glow within that its presence gives, must be shielded from the unreverent gaze of the thoughtless not-understanding world.

And yet the word is spoken, and the eyes let out something of the glow-light, and the face unconsciously reflects its presence. Simply because such a thing as love can't be kept in, nor concealed. He speaks the word cautiously, because of the world's dull ears to its meaning. And yet he speaks it gladly and eagerly to you, his friend or acquaintance, that you may know something of what he knows.

Have you ever talked with any one like that? And did not the words so spoken have a newness and wealth of meaning that neither dictionary nor life had ever brought to you?

Do you know, that must have been the way Jesus talked. Is it any wonder men hung on his words. His whole face, His whole heart and

being were telling new uncommon meanings, while his lips spoke the words in common use. And have you noticed that that is something of the way those persons talk who have been off alone with Jesus a good bit? They never can get from under the spell of His presence, and of the new meanings He gives to words. Though all the time they are unconscious of how far that spell upon themselves is affecting their touch upon others.

It must have been an experience like that that rugged old Elijah had. He had been dealing with thunder-storms, and blasphemous idolators, and an iniquitous king until his eyes flashed lightning, and his earnest loyalty to Jehovah made his voice into high-keyed, shrill, startling thunder peals and tones. And unconsciously he was thinking of the God he was championing so valiantly as something like that, too.

The message of the desert cave, forty days later, wasn't a message of words so much, if at all, but a message of a presence. It is not said that the "still small voice" spoke words. Just an exquisite sound of gentle stillness came, but it told him more of the meaning of "God," and of the great tender heart of love that that word "God" stands for, than he had ever known before.

There are certain words and certain things, that should always be spoken of in just that way,

and never in any other. You know how there are certain rare experiences of your life that you simply *cannot* tell, except to the very few, maybe to only one or two of whose sympathy and understanding you feel sure. And you can't tell them even to these friends at just any time.

There must be the time when their mood is peculiarly sympathetic. There must be a quiet corner, and you yourself in that peculiar heart-mood that allows speech of such things to come, and when the voice and eye and very presence come under the spell of that mood.

"The Place Whereon Thou Standest is Holy Ground."

Now, really the meaning, the great heart meaning, of some of the words we are using rather freely in these quiet talks together, can be gotten only in that way. The words "ideals," and "friendship," and "love," and "home" need a life that embodies them, and a face that unconsciously reflects that life, and a tone of voice, and a mood under the thrall of such a life, before their real meaning can come.

And the meaning of the things we are to speak together of now, in this particular talk, will come in their fineness and depth, and yet in their simplicity, only as you, who are listening so kindly, will bring to them something of, yes,

much of, the sympathetic mood of those listening to most hallowed things, in a quiet corner, where only heart-tones are used.

We have been coming in, step by step, until we have now reached the innermost holy of holies of these quiet talks on home ideals. The home is the holy of holies of the world's life, and of a man's personal life. The life-friendship is the holy of holies of the home. Now we bare our heads all anew, and bow our heads low, as with hushed breath and reverent eye and ear we enter the holy of holies of the life-friendship.

"Ideals" conceived, and believed in, and then woven patiently into the fabric of life, will lead surely into the one great life "friendship" that God plans for us. That friendship builds a "home" in which to abide. Into that home others may come only by invitation; and only those are asked to come who are sympathetic, and who help us, and whom we may help.

Now we are entering that home, built so carefully by friendship's hands; and we are to talk and to taste of its treasured sweets, and to drink great draughts of its strength. We have talked quite a bit about love. Now we want to talk about it a bit more.

Love is creative. It has creative power. It is at its best, and is doing its finest work, and is truest to its best self, when it is creating. It longs to create. It yearns to bring into being

one upon whom it may bestow the ecstasy of living, one with whom it may have full fellowship, and who will delight in having fellowship with his creator. That means one like itself, for, of course, there can be fellowship only wherein there is likeness. That likeness must be full, if the fellowship, and the enjoyment both of creator and created, are to be full, too. This is the very life of love in its freest, highest expression.

This is the first great picture of God that looks out into our faces, as we open those rare old first Genesis pages. God is love. That word "love" is written over the heavens; and over the whole life of the race, tangled up as the life threads do get. It is the one word written under the whole of this simple creation story. God created. He had to, for He is love. The very words for God, so familiar, "Father," "Son," "Spirit," tell of the creative love of God, back in untimed, uncalendared eternity.

He longed for a being like Himself, upon whom He could lavish His love, and whose love would be as sweet incense to Himself. The man was to be a bit of His own very self in powers, in character, and in the right to choose. He was to be as really an autocrat in the realm of his will, as God is in His. With deepest reverence it can be said, God couldn't help creating man, and creating such a man as He did. It is the love-instinct, the God-instinct, to create.

And this very instinct to create, is a bit of the likeness of God in which we men were made. When God said, "Let us make man in our image," He was obeying the same love-instinct, the same parental-instinct, that He put into us.

Fellow-workers with God.

God meant that it should be just as true to say, "Man is love," as to say, "God is love." And some day when all of His great love has worked out to the full, it *will* be said. In the deeper instincts of our being, apart from the influence of sin, it is true that man is love. It is true because he is like God. And our inner consciousness, as we come nearest to God in touch and life, tells us that man is love.

Indeed, he is a man only as he is love. Anything else is a dropping to the level where that horrid foreign thing, sin, has come in to pervert, and stain, and lead us away from ourselves. The love-instinct to create is inbred in man. It underlies the whole life of our race. It is never lost. Indeed, it seems the strongest of all instincts in the race, wherever found, under all conditions.

God and man were intended to live and work together just as the sun and the rosebush do. The sun draws out the new life of the bush in

the spring, gathers up moisture, and holds it in the opening clouds, and sends it down in dew and rain. And the rose answers with its great fresh green, and richest bloom, and sweetest perfume. Its glad "thank you" is breathed fragrantly out the whole live-long day. That's just the way man and God are to live together in all life.

"More of Reverence."

Of course, there are temptations here. Where are they not? Temptation always follows the natural path of life. There is nothing wrong in itself; but anything and everything may become terribly wrong. The sin is in the wrong motive or purpose underneath; or it is in the excess or exaggeration. And nowhere has temptation made stronger, subtler, more persistent raids upon the human life than in these holy things. The very ignorance that has been allowed to shroud this whole matter has led many earnest Christian people into grave wrong here. Ignorance always means thoughtlessness. It leads often into the doing of what is bitterly regretted in after years.

Yet if there should be knowledge, and thoughtfulness, and self-control anywhere, or in anything, surely it should be here in life's holiest,

most potent work. Our unborn children, to be made in our likeness, as well in God's, plead mutely with us for full knowledge, and thoughtfulness, and self-mastery here, for their sakes.

The very warmth of the love that binds two such hearts together, the tenderness of the love for the personality, the body, in which resides the great spirit loved, needs guarding. Love longs for the caress. The touch of hand with hand seems to bring the inner spirits into closer communion. The touching of lip to lip will tingle the whole being with a thrill, as though spirit were answering spirit in rapturous joy.

These very contacts, and the intimacy of the private life, the closeness of contact of two lives together as one, are avenues to be guarded with holy prayer and watchful care. For there is no door into a man's life whose knob is free from the touch of temptation's cunning hand.

Power of itself always awes. A hushing sense creeps into one's spirit at the sight of some great display of power. Niagara stills the spirit with the greatness of its power, and makes the reverent observer think of God. A great engine, with its finely balanced and adjusted mechanism, never ceases to be cause for admiration.

An audience will sit spellbound under the touch of the skilled magician, or the word of the trained master of speech. The thoughtful

physician looks with awe, ever increasing and stilling his inner being, as he watches the marvelous working of that divine bit of machinery, the human body.

It is commonly said that medical students lose much of their sense of reverence for the human body, through their constant study of it, with eye, and hand, and knife. He is a rare man who retains an ever-deepening reverence for the wonders of the human body as he goes through his course of medical study.

It is a bit of the discipline of life to which a man should resolutely set himself, to retain, and cultivate, and refine that sense of reverence in the presence of power however familiar it may become. Every bush of our common life *is* aflame with the holy fire of God's presence. Yet the taking off of shoes seems all too rare.

The powers of the human body are marvelous, wholly beyond words to begin to tell. Here is a laboratory nothing short of divine in its powers of reproduction. It *is* divine in its origin, in the partnership of God's own touch in the holy service, and in the great results that so unfailingly come. Yet it needs a stern purpose, persistently clung to, to have a growing reverence for one's own body.

A man should set himself, with a heart-devotion, to cultivating an ever-growing reverence for the precious body intrusted to his holy

care by her who has given her life into his keeping.

Knowledge will grow from more to yet more. But it takes a stiff purpose, and daily touch with God, and a pure habit of life, to have more of reverence dwelling in us, so that mind and soul and body too, according well, may make one music, and sweeter music too.

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster."[1]

[1] Tennyson.

FATHER—MOTHER: GOD'S FELLOW-CREATORS.

A Mothering Father.
The Greatest Word.
A Fathering God.
Learning to Father.
Father Language.
The Finest School Work.
Fatherhood.
A Window into Fatherhood.
The Superlative Degree of Woman.
The Symphony of Motherhood.
Teaching Life's Language to Baby Lips.
In Search of a Mother.
The Highest Union.

"Mary, when that little child
Lay upon your heart at rest,
Did the thorns, Maid-mother, mild,
Pierce your breast?

"Mary, when that little child
Softly kissed your cheek benign,
Did you know, O Mary mild,
Judas' sign?

"Mary, when that little child
Cooed and prattled at your knee,
Did you see with heart-beat wild,
Calvary?"

Rose Trumbull.

FATHER—MOTHER.

A Mothering Father.

What is the holiest, the dearest word in our tongue? You think a while, and likely you will answer "love." Yes, but love is a sentiment; it is an impersonal word. You never know love except as you know someone loving another. What personal word embodies this word "love" most and best? And most hearts, the world around, will answer "mother." And as a sentiment embodied in a person is always more and higher than the sentiment itself, "mother" is commonly reckoned the holiest and dearest word in our tongue.

That is to say, it is so far as our experience goes. And yet there is another answer that is true, too. Ideally there is a word, holier and higher and deeper in its significance, and that was meant to be sweeter than "mother." That is the word "father." It is not so in man's common experience. That is true. But it is in the thought of God, and in the plan He meant us to fit our lives into.

For "father" includes all that "mother" does, and something more. It is not actually so with most people. But originally it was, and ideally, in God's plan, it still is. Sometimes it is so actually. Sometimes it stands on a level with "mother;" but commonly it falls behind. That the actual does not measure up to the ideal here, tells how much more woman has filled up the measure of God's plan than man, and how far man has fallen behind.

Father means mother, too. It doesn't mean it in common use. We think of "father" as being masculine; and mother as feminine. The one stands distinctively for the strength traits, and the other for the love traits. Though as we think into that distinction we know that it isn't really a very sharp one. For the two meanings cross over the line between them. We can call to mind fathers who have shown a good bit of skill in mothering, too, when the need called for it.

A minister was preaching to his home congregation on Sabbath morning. His son of five years sat in the minister's family pew, with others there. The strain of life had been too much for the mother's strength; the tether of life had worn thin, and raveled out, and then parted, and she had slipped away. It was said, in an undertone, among the families of the church, that the father of the boy, broken-hearted

over his loss, ministered with his own hands to the little fellow's needs, doing what a mother's hands commonly do. But he went quietly on his way in his church ministrations, seeking to hide his grief.

He was preaching as usual this Sabbath morning, and in his sermon spoke of a mother's care, and said, "Who can take the place of a mother?" His little son, listening intently, spoke out, with the unconscious artlessness of a child, and with the slow speech and the thin treble of childish lips, that could be distinctly heard in the quiet of the church, he said, "I think a father does very well." A sudden hush cast its soft spell over the church, as the father swallowed something in his throat, and with glistening eyes smiled bravely down into his little son's face, and then went quietly on with his sermon. All unconsciously the boy was bearing tribute to the real fatherliness of the father who was mothering his motherless son. But in actual experience this is very rare.

We can more easily think of mothers who have been fine fatherers, too, in the absence of the father, and the results of their work have not seemed to show any lack of "strength" traits, either.

That distinction between "father" and "mother" is an old one. It reveals itself in the language used long ago in the old Book.

Moses said to Israel in the Moab Plains, "Thy God bare (or carried) thee as a man doth bear (or carry) his son, in all the way ye went, until ye came to this place."[1] Here is the common thought of a father's distinctive trait of strength. "As one whom his mother comforteth,"[2] brings out the tender heart-meaning we usually associate with the word "mother."

Yet even here the meanings cross over the line between, and help to rub it out as they cross. For "as a father pitieth his children"[3] is a putting of the distinctive mother meaning, the love meaning, into "father." Pity is love moved by weakness and need. On the other side, after a great victory in Israel, the woman leader sang

> "The rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,
> Until that I, Deborah, arose,
> That I arose a *mother* in Israel."

Here was not simply a woman, but a mother acting the part of strength and of leadership, because there was no father, with a father's distinctive traits strong enough to make him a father to his nation. The meanings of the two words constantly blend.

We are apt to think at once that "father"

[1] Deuteronomy i:31. [3] Psalms ciii:13.
[2] Isaiah lxvi:13. [4] Judges v:7.

can't mean "mother," too, because in our experience it hasn't been so, as a rule. Or, at least, the other commoner thought stands out so strongly that we don't think into how far this other can be true. Yet "father" means not only strength as we are apt to think of strength, but as strength really is ideally. Strength includes love, and love at its best of being tender and gentle. And "mother" means "father," too. For love is strong. Its strength to rally its powers and do man's work is marvelous. There are probably many more mothers who have been good fathers too, than there are fathers who have also been mothers.

Yet a father can be a mother, even though it is so exceptional. And that mothers have been fathers less exceptionally brings out the fine fact that the two words blend in their meaning. The words mark a very real difference between the two, and yet it is a difference that is meant to be a disappearing one in real meaning, even while the distinctive traits of each remain. For fathers were meant to take on, and reveal, more and more, the mother's traits of love. And mothers were meant more and more to grow in the father traits of strength. Contact was meant to grow a likeness.

It is not that the distinctive traits of each disappear, but that each takes on the distinctive traits of the other, in addition to his own. The

father living with the mother in the constant touch of life should grow in strength as a father, and yet he should be absorbing into his make-up the fineness and gentleness and tender touch of the mother, too. And she cannot be less a mother, seeing she has the heart she has, but she can absorb into her finer being, though all unconsciously, more of the good independence and self-reliance, and leadership of him who is by her side.

Father means mother, too. And mother means father, not in the mere words themselves, nor in our common use of them, but in the traits of character for which each was meant to stand by Him who taught us to talk.

The Greatest Word.

The word "father" is the strongest word in our language. It may not be the word most loved. Probably no word is more loved, or so much, as the word "mother." Yet that that is so is immensely suggestive. It suggests how much woman has made her distinctive word mean. But it suggests, too, that men have not put into the word "father" the meaning that belongs to it. There have been, and are, countless numbers of fathers who have been real fathers, until that word has meant fully as much

to their children as the word "mother," and has been loved just as dearly. Yet the common experience of the race seems to make it a less tender word, less endearingly and lingeringly spoken. And in so far as that is true it tells the story of how far man has not lived up to the meaning of the great word.

It would be saying the thing more fully to say it this way: *with God* "father" means "mother," too. And if it be so with God, it should be so with man. For God's meaning is the true one. So far as "mother" means more to any child than "father," by so much is spelled out the failure of some man to live the real meaning of "father" out in his daily contact with his children. By so much as "mother," taken broadly among the thousands who use it, means more in the general thought of it, by so far is told woman's greater faithfulness to the highest holiest task of life, committed not to one pair of hands, but to two. When "father" means to a child's heart as much as "mother," there is a man who has yielded to the sway of the mother spirit, and been true to the great simple plan of God.

But that word "father" is the strongest word in our language. That is to say, it has more meaning than any other. It is one of the granite words, the chief one of them. At first flush you may think that there are at least two other words

that mean more, that are stronger in what they stand for, either one or the other according to your experience or maybe according to your mood. The word "will" has been called the strongest of all in the thing it stands for. The will is the imperial bit of us. It is the choosing, deciding part, upon which all else depends. The will is the man. It is essentially the God-image within us.

And then it has been felt and said that "love" is the strongest, in that it stands for that which dominates life most, by all odds. Yet these things all agree. For love is of the will, else it could never sway the heart, and sweep all life as it does. And the will in man, unhurt by sin, as made by God, is an interchangeable word with love. With God to will is to love. And it is so with us men as we allow God's gracious Spirit to sweep our lives.

And both words are included in that great word "father." "Father" means love. It means love at the strongest and finest that love ever reaches. "Father" means a will deciding upon a choice. A man rises up into being a father only as he yields to the sway of love, and chooses to imprint the divine-human image upon a new soul, and to keep it there sweet and fresh and clear. The strongest word is "father." It includes these others in their full meanings. It gets its meaning from God, and

keeps its meaning with men when they are true to the original plan.

"Father" is the most inclusive word. It has already been said that it includes "mother." It also includes king or ruler. It includes teacher, with all of instruction and fine discipline, and personal influence and character-building that that great word itself includes. It includes organizer and manager; and coming last to the highest it includes friend. And, more than including, it gives a fullness of meaning to these words that otherwise would be missing. The word "father" is the father of these other words. It gave birth to them, and it gives present life to them. These other words must go to school to this word "father" before they can rise up into fullness of life in their own right.

A Fathering God.

Why is God called a father? Is it simply a using of a word and a relationship familiar to us so as to convey some idea of what God is like? He is called a Shepherd. Yet He is not a shepherd, and we are not sheep; though that word of David's tells us with wondrous tenderness and realness what sort of a god God is. Is He a father? Or, does He simply mean to teach us that He loves and cares for us as a father does for his children.

Is the word "father" one that God takes up out of our common life? Or is it one that comes down into our life out of the life of God? Is He a father because we are fathers, by an accommodation of a human word? Or, are we fathers because He is a father, and has transferred fatherhood down from Himself to us by direct descent? Which?

It gives great tenderness to the meaning of the word both in using it for God, and in using it among ourselves, to get at the real answer. And the answer is gotten simply by noticing what "father" means; that is, what a father is. A father is one who, because of love, chooses to give of himself, of his own life, that there may be another one, made in his own image, with whom he may have fellowship in spirit, and partnership in service.

And whatever some of our scholarly friends may do with the simple Genesis story of creation, it is impossible to get away from this, that its direct purpose was to let us know that God really fathered man. He was moved by love. He chose to have us made. He gave of His own life that we might come into life; and yet more, that we might come into His own sort of life, life like His, and that we should be in His own likeness in our life.

And He has been acting the father part so fully and faithfully that it can be no mere use

of words, no make-believe for teaching purposes, as loving as that would be in letting us know His heart love. The starry heavens above, the green fertile earth beneath, the answer of earth to heavens in life received, and of heavens to earth in life constantly given—all spell out that word "father" in the fullness of its mothered meaning.

And if there be any doubt at all about this it disappears entirely as we stand on the foot of the hill of the Cross. A father gives of his life at the first that his child may come into life; then he gives constantly that his child may grow into fullness of matured life. And in any emergency that may arise he unhesitatingly gives of his life again, to the extreme of giving it out, that his child may be saved from death.

It was Jesus who taught us to call God Father. The word was used before, but it was used very little. He taught us the blessed habit of using that word for God. But He did infinitely more than teach us the use of a word, even of that great word. He acted the father part for God on Calvary. God breathed out His life in Eden that we might come into life. And He bled out His life on Calvary that our life might be saved in time of terrible danger. Eden and Calvary both join in the spelling of that word "father." And one must use both to spell it out fully.

And all the loving preparation of the earth beforehand, and all His patient care of the life of the earth, and of the race ever since, regardless of our ignoring of Him, and blaspheming of Him, all underscore that word with constantly new emphasis. God *is* our Father in the plainest meaning of that word.

Learning to Father.

Why did God choose to be a father? With deepest reverence be it said, He couldn't help it. His love compelled Him to become our Father. Only so could He tell out the love of His heart. He is our Father. He has fathered the whole race from the beginning. He still does. He fathers every new precious bit of humanity that comes. He never fails to join His fatherhood with ours. Every child has two fathers, the human, and above him, the divine; the human, father of his body; the divine, of his spirit.[1] No human being can be born as a human being, with immortal spirit as well as body, without the direct creative touch of God upon him.

There's another question that comes yet closer in these homely talks. Why did God choose this father-plan for us men that we too should be fathers bringing forth life in our own image and in His? He could, of course, have chosen some

[1] Hebrews xii:9.

other plan if in His wisdom He saw best. Why this? Well, without doubt it was a part of the likeness of Himself which He was giving to us. He would make us to be fathers because He is a father. He is a creator; He made us creators, too. We were to know the ecstasy of creating-love, as well as He.

Then we were to have full fellowship with Him in His work. We were to be fellow-creators. Only those who are fully alike can be fellows, one both in spirit and in work together. The image of God in man was to be full, not partial. God made us in His image that we might be His fellows in creative work. He began the creative work. He made us to join hands with Him as His fellow human creators, continuing His work step by step, from generation to generation, and He working with us at every step.

And yet there is more than this. Above and underneath every other reason that may be thought of is this: by being fathers we can come to understand God's father-heart. So we come into that real knowledge of the strength and tenderness of His love that grips our hearts. Through the experience of fatherhood and motherhood we come nearest to knowing God. Only we are constantly reminded that He is so much more than we; but it is more of the same sort.

Only through such experience can we come to

know Him fully, with all the emphasis on that word "fully." So we enter into fullness of fellowship with Him. Only so can we understand God's heart in the depth of its tender yearning over us, and in the marvel of His giving His life out for us.

And then there is a step farther yet that brings us still nearer to the practical: only as we get some glimpse of the father-heart of God can we be real fathers and mothers to our children. For as God is a father even so the father is a god. Father and mother are as God to the child. That is to say, they are to the child in the place of God, until the child's awakening thought can be transferred to his parents' God, and then find out how much more God is than they; and yet simply "more," not different in kind.

The child looks up to us, as we look up to God. The child gets his first thought of God from father and mother. What purity and love and wisdom and simplicity should we pray for and practice! We are the child's god. We are telling him by our lives what God is—if we are; maybe what He isn't. Whatever we are telling with presence and life that God is, in the child's thought.

Father Language.

Though God is called a father in the Bible, He is never called a mother. Yet what we think of as the mother language is used of Him frequently. The phrase in the Psalms, "under the shadow of his wings," [1] with its variations, is of course the mother language from bird and farm life. There is a quaint homeliness in the words of Jesus, as He is pouring out His distress over Jerusalem, that goes with peculiar power into one's heart. He said "even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings." [2] That was the father-mother heart of God in Jesus crying out its grief over prodigal children.

The word "brooding," which is so characteristically a mother word, both before the birth and afterwards, is almost the very first word used of God in that great first Genesis chapter.[3] It is actually the second. There is a great touch of realism, and of that which touches the human heart most, and most quickly, in that early vivid picture of God.

Why is the word mother not used for God? Simply because "father" means "mother," too,

[1] Psalms xvii:8; xxxvi:7; lvii:1; lxi:4; lxiii:7; xci:4; Ruth ii:12.

[2] Luke xiii:34, Matthew xxiii:37.

[3] Genesis i:2. Revision, margin.

with God. We call this sort of language mother language because it is so with us. But with God it is father language. Father means mother, too. Ah! who among us has grasped the full sweet dignity of being a father, a mother; a father and mother together united in one, that so God's own great word "father" may stand truly for the two in one. No higher dignity was ever conferred upon man. It is a taking of us up, by God, to the level with Himself.

Now, of course, this fatherhood of God is what the theologians would call His creative fatherhood, which includes all the race. There is still a higher, His redemptive fatherhood, which includes all who come back home to the Father through Jesus. Man became a prodigal. He left his Father. He still remains a son creatively, but has cut himself off from the Father by sin. When he returns he becomes a son in a new higher sense also, a redeemed son. The Holy Spirit puts the child spirit into his heart and he instinctively calls God Father again.[1]

We are talking here about God's creative fatherhood, which began in Eden and has continued through every generation, and still does. John's words about that higher fatherhood come all anew as we think of the only less wonders of God's creative fatherhood. "Behold what man-

[1] Romans viii:15.

ner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God; *and we are.*" [1] And He is Father. And we, too, are to be fathers in His meaning of the word, by His fatherly help. So we enter into the inner heart of God. Behold what love, and what honor bestowed upon us!

The Finest School Work.

The father and mother together are to become a father. It takes two to make one. We are to go to school to our Father-God until the two joined in one shall be as He is in fatherhood. The father is to be a father with all the mother meaning, too. The mother is to be truly a father in strength and life even while her most loved name remains mother. And so the two together shall teach the child of his heavenly Father, by the father-life they two-in-one live together before his eyes.

This higher father life of father and mother together is the rarest of all schooling. The older we get, and the more we grow, the more we realize that life is all just going to school. It is school work from birth, to the new birth up into the unseen life above. And he gets most out of it, and gives most out to it who enters into all of his life with the real school spirit.

[1] I John iii:1. Revision.

Earnestness of purpose, a humble remembering of how little we know, eagerness to learn, patience in the learning, willingness to work hard,—this is essentially the school spirit.

Even when we know much there is always more; and the more we don't know is so much more than the much that we do know. God leads us here into the greatest schoolroom of life. It's a schoolroom for the child, of course, with us to play the part of teacher. But it is just as much a schoolroom for us who do the teaching. There is constant study, working out new problems, finding new meanings of words, training the mind to think, the heart to be wise in its loving, the spirit to be both strong and gentle, the tongue to obey implicitly, the hand to be deft, the patience to be tireless, the bodily strength to be wisely conserved,—what schooling!

There are frequent reviews and tests and examinations, promotions and demotions, too; for often the way up is down. And in and through is a Presence, unseen but that may be felt, a Father-Teacher, watching, smiling, showing the next step, never tired nor critical, always eager and patient, with the true teacher-spirit, ever drawing us up the heights.

It's the best kind of school because it combines teaching and being taught. It's going to school, and yet teaching school yourself. Every

bit that is gotten from the Teacher and the lessons is being taught in one way or another all the time. There is no learning like that which must be put into use at once. And no teaching equals that which has come up out of life's experience.

Fatherhood.

It means much more to be a father, even in the common limited meaning of that word, than many of us seem to have found out. It means thoughtfulness beforehand. Not merely thoughtfulness about the life whose coming makes a father, but about one's self a long time before that glad event; because the man makes the father, even as the father the child.

Whatever a man might wish to have his child be, that he must be himself for long years before. And what he would not have the growing son to be that he must not be. For the man gives himself out, physically and mentally, habits and thoughts and purpose, to become another one like himself. There are a great many men who have children who are not fathers, except in the barren technical and legal meaning. And there can be no meaning so empty of meaning as the legal and technical meaning.

Fatherhood does not begin at the birth of a

child. Its beginnings go as far back as a man is making his character by his habit of life.

And fatherhood ends—when? ever? In the best meaning, never. Yet there comes a distinct change in the relation when the child is grown to maturity, and especially when he enters into fullness of life with another. All through the tender years, the growing years, the difficult years bristling with questions, he is to be a father in ever growing richness of meaning, a mothering father, until he finds the highest image of manhood and of womanhood imprinted on his own, to whom he gave life.

The father is the head of the home, with gentle dignity acting his full part as head. He is the priest and minister to his household. The simple word of thanksgiving at the meal, the gathering of the family together, morning or night or both, for reading a bit out of the old Book of God, and in simplest homeliest language giving thanks, and asking a blessing upon the circle—these belong to the father. They are a part of the simple meaning of the word "father." For a father is a priest or minister. He was a father before he was a priest, and only became priest because he was a father.

The father is a human mediator between God and these whom he has created with God's part-

nership. Quite apart from what a man's creed or church may be, he stands to his family for God, to teach of God, to lead in the worship of God, and to act the part of God's man to his own inner circle. And he stands to God for his family, to voice their thanksgiving, and needs. This is a part of his father part in the family.

The father is the administrator of the home, with wisdom and firmness and much loving gentleness, holding all things true to the law of the little home realm. He is the teacher and companion of his children. His bread-earning takes him away for most of the day likely. But every other thing comes in distinctly second to the glad great service in the home. With the mother, he is in his home the teacher of the school, the consulting librarian of the book world, the president of the literary society, and of the social club, the chief craftsman of the workshop, to the group he is fathering.

The problems, the unceasing questions, the difficulties, the temptations of his sons and daughters belong to him, up to and including the time when their love affairs begin to come. There is no greater achievement ever attained by any mortal than to get and to hold, clear through these years and experiences, the full simple unhesitating confidence of one's boys and girls. And there is no wealth of life, either in

experience or brain or heart—with mere money not high enough up to be reckoned in—to be compared with this.

A friend of ours had two little daughters. He was the secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association of his city. One day one of his daughters asked her mother to ask her father for a certain thing for her. The mother gently said, "You ask papa yourself, dear." "Well," she hesitatingly said, "you know I'm not very well acquainted with papa." He was an earnest Christian man, with warm sympathetic heart, especially with workingmen, among whom he was a favorite. Yet he was all unconsciously teaching his daughter a meaning of God as father that left her poor. And he was missing a meaning that would have greatly enriched his heart for the work to which his whole life was so ardently and intelligently given.

A neighbor had come into a home to talk a bit with the little three-year-old daughter of whom she was fond. "How many brothers have you?" she asked. "Three," promptly replied the little one. "Three? Why, I thought there were only two. What are the names of your three brothers?" And the little one replied, "Launcie and Teddo and Papa." And when the words were faithfully reported to the father in the evening, a new warmth gathered in his heart as he smiled, for he knew he had

thus far been a real father-companion to his daughter.

A Window into Fatherhood.

One morning, a good many years ago, a boy of six or seven years was starting away for the district school, about a half-mile down the road. His mother went to the gate with him, putting his lunch basket in his hand, and, as she kissed him good-by, bidding him not to linger by the way, but to go straight to school, and come straight back. And she stood looking after him a little anxiously, for going to school was a new experience to him.

And the boy, going down the road, came to the bridge he had to cross, wondered if he could see a fish, stopped a moment to look into the water, and saw the prettiest fish with the prettiest yellow and red spots, and then saw another one, 'way down half way out from under a stone ledge. Then he suddenly remembered his mother's word and hastened on. But, just as he got off the bridge, there on the bush right in front was a butterfly with such beautiful, bright colors. And he put the lunch basket down, took his cap off, and creeping softly up to the bush, put his cap down on the butterfly—he *thought.*

But, when he began very cautiously to lift the cap off, the butterfly wasn't there. Oh! there it was just ahead on that next bush, and he went up to that. But it flew off before he got there. And he went after it. And there they went, butterfly and boy. But the fly kept ahead, and by and by the boy suddenly remembered his mother's words. He guessed he'd better get to school as soon as he could. He turned around to get the lunch basket at the bridge.

But the bridge wasn't there, and he couldn't see a thing familiar. He had gone so far that he had gotten clear away from anything he knew. So he quickly tried to get back, but he couldn't seem to find the bridge, nor anything that he knew. And he kept going till noon came, and hunger, but no lunch basket; then afternoon, and then shadows. At last he thought if he were to go through a field of corn he saw he would find the way back. But the corn was higher than the boy, and he was soon more lost than ever.

Then he remembered how his mother had told him often that if ever he was in trouble, if he'd pray, God would answer. Well, he thought he was in trouble now surely, and the only thing left to do was to pray. He knew two prayers, "Now, I lay me," and "Our Father." The first didn't seem just suitable; he decided on the second. So he kneeled in the tall corn, and with

eyes shut and clasped hands began in a pretty trembly voice, "Our Father, which——"

Just then a man's voice said, "Well, Isaac, what is it?" And there was his father just behind him in the corn! And soon the tired-out boy was in his father's arms. And as they went back home the father talked quietly to his son, and told him how he had been thinking about him that morning, and had followed him thinking something might happen to him in his new experience of going to school alone. He had followed, and watched all day, and then helped God answer his prayer.

Then he said, "That's what God is like; you can't see Him, but He is always watching you, not to find fault, though He sees the faults, but to help; and He's always near," and a good deal more. And they reached home. The boy went to school, and to another school, and to college, and then to a seminary, and became a preacher, and then the president of a college in Eastern New York State.

In his preaching he referred frequently to God as a father in a very warm and tender way. And when he was asked how he got such a tender idea of God, he would smile, and tell his boyhood experience. What a blessed boy he was with such a father! And what a father! not only in his love, but in his wise using of an incident so small and commonplace.

Was a day ever better spent, even though the daily round was all broken up? That day's experience with his father did more in making him the man he came to be than all the college and seminary days could have done without it. You can see big fields through a very narrow chink in a fence. That incident would be only one of a life-time with such a father.

He who *lives* with his children, breathing the fragrance of his strength into their lives, sharing with them his wisdom gotten in many a hard experience, nursing them up into fine-grained vigor, imparting to them the highest ideals, jealous of letting any one else teach them first the higher hallowed things, sharing the difficulties and joys and sacred confidences—he is a father. And the father who has the father-heart, and gives himself to his children, will be receiving all afresh from them the spirit of confidence, and simplicity, and love, that will make his own life young, even while the gray is creeping in over ears and temples.

The Superlative Degree of Woman.

And why talk about mothers, when all the world unites in their praise! Woman's faithfulness in home and church, the two crisis points of life, stands out big and clear. In the grammar of experience the superlative degree of man

to express, and the expressive capacity of metre is marked. In the absence of like a larger part of the lady made of hopes is concerned to the earliest rounds. Whole the latter could be brought almost how time is allowed to prove future. And her character will for her her work Delicate, the Lucid words.

The fine blending of strength and brain with the tempering heart-warm, native to her mental genius, reveals the wisdom that sanctifies this poem as the plea of life to her vision. It was such a woman who inspired the pen that wrote

> "Oh, sweet, brilliant Sunday the
> With college sweet and fragrant
> Thou has not known the pride of being
> Thou would has never heard the cheers,
> Thou walks of old long vanished years,
> The valleys of the yesterdays

> "Thou is but sunshine, love, but dreams,
> But words to utter words of power
> To make hearts sweet, being dreams, near.
> To wait a smile and wipe a tear
> And to our eyes thou is the
> Is but some rare place and day

> "Around her sunlight hours are twined,
> As round with tendrils vine embraced,
> And following days for lovable feet
> Are but to strew love and sweet,
> And find all pansy and grand
> In her divine motherhood.

"She keeps her faith unshadowed still;
God rules the world in good and ill;
Men in her creed are brave and true
And women pure as pearls of dew,
And life for her is high and grand
By work and glad endeavor spanned.

"This sad old earth's a brighter place
All for the sunshine of her face;
Her very smile a blessing throws,
And hearts are happier where she goes;
A gentle, clear-eyed messenger,
To whisper love—thank God for her!"[1]

Yet the collegian, and the clever brilliant thinker, whose service has been heralded afar from home, have had sweet victories here too. Such training and gifts cannot of themselves make a mother, and neither can they hinder motherhood, but may immensely enrich the life and simple home service when the heart guides and controls.

And how can we talk of mothers tenderly enough to come home to any heart that really knows a real mother! And yet the skilled artist continually keeps his eye up to tone by keeping at hand the primary colors in their purity. The Master Himself spent time off daily with the Father, and sometimes all day, and long nights, that He might keep the tone of His life up to the concert pitch of the upper-world standards.

[1] L. M. Montgomery.

And so we may well talk a bit further together of true motherhood, both for those who are mothers, and for those whose coming years hold that responsible joy in reserve for them.

Need it be said, that motherhood, through which the race comes to birth, comes only to its own birth out of the womb of sacrifice? Sacrifice is the low undertone to all the music of a mother's life, for months before the birth-time, and through the long years after. It is a living sacrifice, too. "I would die for you," said an earnest young wife to her husband. "Yes," he replied tenderly, "I know you would; but there's something more than that that I need from you, that will cost you far more. I need you to *live* for me."

The noble martyrdom of men whose lives went painfully out at the stake, may, with all due reverence for their fidelity and courage, be called easy, when compared with the daily giving out of the life through the years by thousands of mothers. The giving of the life up to the flames has more sharp pain, intenser suffering, in it. The giving of it out just as really and fully, but slowly, gradually, year in and year out, in the same old round, but with an ever new smile, until the calendar's work is done, is a vastly more severe test.

> "So he died for his faith. That is fine.
> More than the most of us do.

But stay. Can you add to that line
That he *lived* for it, too?

"It is easy to die. Men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado or passion or pride.
Was it hard for him?

"But to *live*: every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt.

"Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we'll talk of the life that he led.
Never mind how he died."

And yet a far keener word about sacrifice remains to be said. Those who talk most about their sacrifices, or even who think about them, may be making real sacrifice, but they usually know least of what sacrifice means. Those who sacrifice most think less, and talk not at all, about their sacrifices. There are two definitions of sacrifice; the cheaper one in commoner use; and the other, the real one, that like the trailing arbutus hides its sweet fragrance under the green.

In the cheaper meaning sacrifice is giving up; it is suffering, maybe suffering real pain for someone or something. And this *is* sacrifice, let it be said. In the deeper, richer meaning there is suffering, too; but that is only part; and,

however keen and cutting, still the smaller part. Sacrifice is love purposely giving itself, regardless of the privation or pain involved, that so more of life's sweets may come to another. Sacrifice is love meeting an emergency, and singing because you are able to meet and to grip it.

The sweets of sacrifice sweep your spirit with their quiet ecstasy, even while the knife cuts deepest, and the pain tugs hardest. Love knows there will be the pain, and thinks of it, and deliberately decides to endure it, because so will come some great boon to another. And the joy of victory makes sweetest music, of which the sacrifice is the subdued minor under-chording.

A lady was calling upon a friend whose two children were brought in during the call. As they talked together the caller said eagerly, and yet with evidently no thought of the meaning of her words, "Oh! I'd give my life to have two such children." And the mother replied, with a subdued earnestness whose quiet told of the depth of experience out of which her words came, "That's exactly what it costs!"

Yet there was a gleam of light in her eye, and a something in her manner, that told more plainly than words that though she had given much, she had gotten more, both in the possession of the children, and in the rare enrichment of her spirit.

All life is made sacred by the deep red tinge-ing of sacrifice that runs through every bit of it.

"I could not at the first be born,
But by another's bitter, wailing pain;
Another's loss must be my greatest gain.
And love, only to gain what I might be,
Must wet her couch forlorn
With tears of blood, and sweat of agony.

"Since then I cannot live a week
But some fair thing must leave the daisied dells,
The joys of pastures, bubbling springs and wells,
And grassy murmurs of its peaceful days,
To bleed in pain, and reek,
And die, for me to tread life's pleasant ways.

"Naked, I cannot clothed be,
But worms must patient weave their satin shroud;
The sheep must shiver to the April cloud,
Yielding his one white coat to keep me warm;
In shop and factory
For me must weary, toiling beings swarm.

"I fall not on my knees and pray,
But God must come from heaven to fetch that sigh,
And pierced hands must take it back on high,
And through His broken heart and cloven side,
Love makes an open way
For me, who could not live but that He died.

"Oh! awful, sweetest life of mine,
That man and God both serve in blood and
and tears.
If on myself I dare to spend
This sacred thing in pleasure, lapped and
reared,
What am I but a hideous idol smeared
With human blood?"

The Symphony of Motherhood.

No one can begin to tell the countless struggles, out of which come the sweetest victories of motherhood. A bit of a story of the inner side came to us one day. It was told by a gentle-faced woman, whose eyes looked out at us like balls of subdued, kindly fire from under a softening drapery of iron-gray, and whose wrinkled face seemed to tell of battles fierce and long; and yet there was a great peace passing our understanding that told of victories greater than the fightings.

It was of a young mother who had knelt to pray. It was late at night, near the midnight hour. Her husband was miles away, with the army, at the front. The babies were snugged carefully in, and sleeping soundly. The quiet of the night seemed so peaceful after the busy day, so full of numberless little important duties.

She had been sitting by the lamplight, with an old Bible lying open, and some papers and pen. She had been putting down in simple black and

white her covenant to rear these children for God. Life was a hard tug with her,—hard steady pulling, long hours, and a very firm jaw needed to stretch the slender funds out over clothing and food and rent and all else.

Now she was silently kneeling with closed eyes. And as she prayed there came a sense of a strange presence, an ugly unwholesome dark presence, intangible but very real. It shook her quite a bit, as she wondered. Then that presence seemed to be daring her, defying her, and to her ears there seemed to come a very real audible growl, like a spiteful defying gutteral growl between shut teeth—u-u-uh-u-u-gh-gh.

But she quietly prayed on, and still prayed on, and repeated her covenant. And that strange ominous something left her. And another presence seemed nearer, and into her ears was spoken so clearly and tenderly the words, "In due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." And with that for a pillow, she lay down and found sweet sleep, and wakened in the early morning to the same tireless round.

Many years came and went. While that strange experience was never repeated, many a time the sharpness of the struggle brought it vividly back to her. But she remained true to her purpose, and plodded on, holding hard to that night's message.

And those babies? One is with her mother

in the Master's presence after a short life fragrant for Jesus in her circle of friends. One has been singing the gospel to many hundreds; two others are telling the story of Jesus weekly to crowds of eager listeners. God's "due season" brought a rich "reap" to the unfainting sower.

And as we listened with a touch of awe we seemed to know that this was a bit of the inside struggle that belongs to the rule rather than the exception. Love, struggle, sacrifice, victory, great peace—these are the ever-recurrent notes in the sweet symphony of motherhood.

Sacrifice is the a and the z, and all the vowels and consonants in between of motherhood. But it is a sacrifice that spells love out bigger and brighter, and in the spelling rings the music of it sweeter and clearer than any other. Sacrifice is love at its best. There is no other spirit for motherhood; no other key to unlock its doors; no other solution of its tangling problems; no other sure weapon to lay its foes low in the dust. And no other inspiration is equal to it for holding you steady, and true, true and steady in the fierce undertow of the tide of life. Aye, and no chambered symphony can equal its low, sweet music; and nothing else can bring the rich, heart-satisfying results in the twilight of life's evening.

Teaching Life's Language to Baby Lips.

Motherhood's duties cannot be intrusted to other hands. It is a sad breach of life's most sacred trust when that is done. There are emergencies, of course, when the mother's lack of strength makes help grateful, and when other hands must help. And there are women who have never borne children who are yet mothers of the best sort in heart and head and hand. But such transferring of the trust to other hands must always be reckoned the exceptional thing, done only under stress of storm. The mother may not give into other hands the moulding of that precious life, and the true mother won't, save when she must. No one *can* minister to child needs as the mother.

"A little wound, a little ache,
A little blistered thumb to take
With touch of love and make it well—
These things require a mother's spell.
Ah, sweet the progress of the skill
That science brings unto the ill.
Vast range of methods new and fine;
But when our little ones repine,
The mother is the very best
Of doctors into service prest.

"Sunshine and air and mother's spell
Of helping little lads get well,
And helping little lassies, too—

Here are three remedies that do
So much more, often, than the grave,
Skilled hands that try so hard to save.
For Doctor Mother, don't you know,
Gives something more than skill—gives so
Much of herself; gives, oh, so much
Of love's sweet alchemy of touch!

"Upon a little wardroom bed
A little curl-encircled head,
A little slender hand and pale,
A little lonesome, homesick wail,
Loved nursing best of skill and care,
But, oh, behold the wonder there
When Doctor Mother, bearing sun
From where the wilding roses run,
Leans down, with hungering love and kiss—
There is no medicine like this!

"In little child-heart's hour of woe,
Pain, ache or life-wound's throb and throe,
The Doctor Mother knows so well
The weaving of love's wonder-spell—
Just what the little heart requires,
Just how to cool the fever fires;
Just how much tenderness and cheer
Will calm the little doubt and fear,
How much of tenderness will ease—
Alone she knows such arts as these!"[1]

The newspapers a few years ago had a bit from one of the Northwestern States of more than passing interest. A mother was disturbed on finding that her little child couldn't talk. He

[1] Baltimore Sun.

would make strange sounds, but couldn't talk even baby talk. She consulted her physician wondering if the vocal organs were defective. He was a man of Finnish birth. A very brief examination disclosed the startling fact that this American woman's child was talking Finnish, and had been scolding her mother for not talking to her. The nurse-maid, into whose keeping the child had been almost wholly given, was a Finnish woman, and naturally talked in her mother tongue the endearing baby talk dear to all woman hearts.

The discovery revealed at once who was moulding and mothering the child. The story is both amusing and pathetic. It was not a serious thing that the child should be taught some other language than the mother's. But it becomes a very serious thing when baby lips and child lips, the growing boys' and girls' lips are allowed to learn the language of life from any but mother and father lips. Many a man has gotten his moral grammar horribly tangled because it wasn't learned from the right lips.

In Search of a Mother.

The touch of being dining-table companions in a hotel for a while gave us acquaintance with a woman who gave us a little glimpse into her early life. She was a woman of old family and

good schooling, of gentle culture, and of much of the broader culture that foreign travel gives.

One day, with a bit of the hunger from childhood days still lingering in eye and voice, she said: "I have never had a mother such as you have had, though I have never seen your mother. Oh! She was kind, but she didn't talk with me about the things that a girl naturally inquires into as she grows up. And she didn't talk with me about anything with the seriousness of a mother-wise heart. And when I would go to her longing for real counsel, she would say, 'Oh! I guess so,' or some such word, and never seem to feel my soul's yearnings."

Another day, with a merry laugh, she told us a bit of a story of her child days. The childlike naturalness and simplicity, together with the touching pathos have made the story linger in our memories ever since. Her brother and she were sent to the country to live with their grandmother, because the country was better than the city for little folks, they were told. They used to sit together, and talk about it, and say that they were the only little boy and girl there that had no real home and no father and mother. All the other little children had happy homes with fathers and mothers. And they felt bad.

They talked it all over many times. And one day they decided to go to a village that they had heard of. It was about twelve miles away. She

was the leader in the plan. She knew, she told her brother, that there was a home with a real father and mother waiting for them in that enchanted village. They would be hugged and kissed *every* night when they were put to bed. She *knew* it would be so. So one day they took the book of poems, "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," that their nurse used to read them to sleep with, and a bandanna handkerchief in which they tied up their "nighties," and started down the road.

They trudged along wearily, but they thought of the home with the father and mother who would take them in, and put warm arms around them, and kiss, and hug them. And the vision of warm arms and kisses ahead drew them on. About three miles down the road a former servant in their grandmother's home saw them, and came out, and asked where they were going. They said, "We will tell you, but you must not *tell* anybody." And they told their little story. And then old Peggy, the servant said, "But you are hungry; come in and get something to eat." "No," they said, "it is twelve miles to—— and night will soon be here, and we must hurry on."

But Peggy said they would make faster time if they would stop for something to eat, and a little rest. So in they went, and had a good meal, and a sleep. And when they wakened,—there

was grandmother's carriage waiting to take them back! And a short, unconventional, but very forceful sentence, which we understood instantly finished the story,—"Peggy had peached."

And as we listened with laughter, and something wet in our eyes, the early hunger of the child-heart still seemed to look out at us from our friend's eyes; and it still haunts us as we tell the simple tale over for mothers' hearts to hear. There were fine family, good schooling, the culture and refinement that money can give, and some it couldn't give; but no mother nor father; money but no mother. Poor poverty-stricken lives!

The Highest Union.

But however much a father may do, or mother be, there is the finer work of father and mother together, the two acting as one in this holy ministry of love. The highest union of all is needed for this most sacred trust and task. The *union of hearts* comes first as love's work begins. The *technical union of lives* leads to the *actual* union of two lives into one. There needs to be a perfect union of hearts as lovers and friends living together, real full harmony of spirit under and above and through all the differences of opinion and of viewpoint that go with strong individuality.

Then there needs to be yet more: a *deeper union of lives,* a fuller, more closely interwoven union of lives as father and mother for the children's sake. The loom of common life together, with Love tending the loom, will do yet closer and closer weaving, if allowed to. Here is a new reason for oneness. These two are to be one, in the thought of the growing child.

And that means a real union under the surface. For there is no keener eye nor understanding, than that of the child. He is conscious of the oneness, or the lack of it, long before he is conscious of being conscious, before his lips could put the half-born thought into words.

And then there is a step higher up. As the unseen Father in the home is allowed full sway He will be weaving the highest union of all, the *union of character.* The father will be growing the mother traits; and the mother the father traits, until God's word "father" shall be true of the two together as it cannot be of either one alone.

THE BABE: A FRESH ACT OF GOD.

The Latest Marvel of Creation.
A Child for an Answer.
The Child Character Fresh from God.
The Babe is Telling the Glory of God.
"Their Angels."
Hurting a Child.
The Babe's First Request.
The Babe Preacher.
Some Blessed Sermons.
A Rare Experience.
Life's Best Finishing School.

Mother of Sorrows, I—
But my Babe is on my breast;
He resteth quiet there
Who bringeth the weary rest;
He lieth calm and still,
Who bringeth the troubled peace,
Who openeth prison doors
And giveth the sad release;
For there reacheth Him yet no sound,
No echo of cry or moan;
To-day, little Son, little Son,
To-day Thou art all my own.

. . . . . .

Mother of Sorrows, I—
And the sword shall pierce my heart;
But to-day I hold Him close
From the cruel world apart.
It waits with smiting and gibes,
With scourging and hatred and scorn,
With hyssop and wormwood and gall,
The cross and the crown of thorn;
The nations shall watch Him die;
Lifted upon the tree;
But to-day, little Son, little Son,
To-day Thou art safe with me.

Annie Johnson Flint.

THE BABE.

The Latest Marvel of Creation.

The new-born babe is a fresh act of God. He is the latest revelation of God's creative handiwork. He is God's last messenger to earth. The babe's presence so fresh and pure says all anew "God is faithful." Generations of sin and disobedience and ignoring of God by us men have not changed Him. His touch is upon this last babe as much as upon the first that lay in Eve's arms. Here is the latest impress of the wondrous image of God.

The babe face is a new window of heaven. Through it the upper-world folks look down upon us. And through it we look up to them, gathered about the Father in the upper home. In those babe eyes the Father Himself is looking into our eyes, and we may look up into His. Each babe is a fresh touch of Eden's purity and beauty.

He tells us of the early Eden life long ago, and of the new Eden life,—far ahead?—maybe less far than we think. He tells, too, of a present

Eden life if God may have His way, a blessed remnant of old Eden, and an earnest of the yet more blessed new Eden ahead. The babe is God's prophecy of His coming plan for man. And the reality is always more than the prophecy.

The babe is a marvel of organization. The fine adaptation and adjustment are exquisite. What wonderful precision of action! Have you ever put your ear down over the baby's heart, and listened quietly and intently to that marvelous bit of human engineering? There is a touch of awe in its rhythmic thumping throb, as it tirelessly pumps the fresh life-current through all the body. No thoughtful man can study his own baby, and in his heart doubt the existence of God.

And what a marvel of helplessness! His dependence upon others is so complete as to be pathetic. He is a bundle of wants, and yet he is utterly unable to tell one of them, though plainly enough he feels many of them before we are aware of them. His only language is a cry, an inarticulate cry.

Yet the thoughtful mother-ear quickly learns the language of that cry. All babe cries are alike to an unlearned outsider. But the love-taught mother knows the difference between a distress signal and a request. One cry says plainly, "I'm in discomfort, or pain." Another

says just as plainly, "Please give me this or this." And the mother-linguist supplies the lack of definiteness by her thought.

No babe of all the animal creation is so helpless. Because the finest takes the longest to grow. The highest must have the deepest foundation. Slow development, with normal conditions means greater fineness and strength.

And the babe is yet more a marvel of possibility. The man who will sway thousands to his will as the whirlwind sweeps the forest, lies sleeping in that babe. The organizer of the world's industries, or the leader of the world's thought, or the changer of the world's life, and of the map of the earth, is in that wee morsel of humanity lying in his mother's arms.

That cooing voice may compel the whole world to listen. Those fat dainty fingers may pen words that a world will be eager to read, and ready to be moulded. A Wesley or a Faraday may be there, only waiting the coming of his day of action. And, far more than these, the man who will re-live Jesus' life, with all its simplicity and purity and fragrance, in some humble corner, that shall touch and tinge deep the life of the crowd, may lie there all open to the impress of father and mother.

The babe is like a clean slate. You may write upon it what you will. He is like a dry sponge ready to absorb all the moral moisture in the air

'round about. We must always be grateful to the babe that inspired a father's heart to write:

"Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into the here.

"Where did you get those eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

"What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

"Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

"What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

"What makes your cheek like a warm, white rose?
I saw something better than anyone knows.

"Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

"Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

"Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

"Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherub's wings.

"How did they all come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew.

"How did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about you, and so I am here." [1]

A Child for an Answer.

Jesus rescued the babe from out of the corner where he had been thrust, and restored him to his own rightful place in society again. That is, He did it as far as He could. He could do it wholly only as men entered wholly into His thought, and eagerly worked with Him. Jesus found the babe and his mother covered up by rubbish, neglected and enslaved, used and sold as common chattels. And He freed them together to a marvelous extent.

But the task is a continuous one. He must be allowed full sway in the life for the babe's sake. For only so can the babe come to his own. Every bit of sin and ignorance hits and hurts the babe, even though the connection may seem very remote. He absorbs the atmosphere of his surroundings. The freer we are from sin through the Master's blessed grace, and the more He is allowed to come in and sway our lives, the more do our babes come into their birthright. And what will one not do for his babe's sake!

One day Jesus preached a great, illustrated sermon to his own inner circle of disciples. They had been discussing very earnestly among

[1] George MacDonald.

themselves which one was the greatest, each one probably thinking of himself. It seems childish at first flush. Yet the discussion doesn't seem to have stopped yet, entirely, over in *our* neighborhood. Mark keenly, Jesus' answer was a *child*. He quietly called a little child, and set him in the midst of the group, and began talking about the child character.

This was His great simple answer to their ambitious self-seeking. They had gotten completely away from the child-spirit. Their eagerness to get ahead of each other in the kingdom of heaven was painful evidence of how little they knew of the spirit of that kingdom, and how thoroughly they were blocking their own way in. Jesus made the child their teacher; not by anything the child said; only by the *speech of his presence.*

It was probably quite a young child. He would not seem to take in what the Master was speaking of; though the child always takes in far more than we think. Likely as not Jesus held him on His knee, and kept him interested, as He talked softly and quietly with the men. And the child would look up into His face, or maybe would snug his little head against the Master's bosom. For Jesus and the babes were always great friends and perfectly understood each other. It was a great acted-out parable of how He has been seeking to teach all men.

That has been God's simple plan of teaching men everywhere from the beginning,—setting a child in the midst. He sets a child in our midst that from his young life we may learn the true spirit of life, the unhurt human spirit, the God-spirit. If in His love, He has set a child in the midst of your little circle, treat that child with utmost reverence, for he is God's teacher to you. In him God speaks to you very distinctly and earnestly.

The Child Character Fresh from God.

Shall we gather about the child with the Master Himself in our midst, and listen anew to some of the teaching? There are certain simple traits that stand out in the child character before the hurt of sin has gotten in enough to spoil or destroy them.

First of all is purity. There is no thought of evil in the child mind. The circumstance, or word, or incident, or presence, that suggests evil of some sort to others is wholly free of any such suggestion to him. To the pure all things are pure. To the pure thought of the child all life is pure. The thing that suggests to many an opportunity of indulging some wrong desire, or ascribing a wrong motive, is quite free of that thought to his pure mind.

This suggests at once how unnatural a thing

sin is. Evil must be taught to the child by speech, or example, or absorption, else he will not know it. The purity of early childhood is one of God's Eden gifts, and tells us constantly of the purity that belongs to us, and that we may have again.

And a child's trust is wonderful beyond any comparison. No words can tell how simply and fully he trusts, nor what a blessing the trusting spirit is. His trust is simple and full. No suspicion ever enters in. No sense of fear intrudes its disturbing presence. The trust is all the more striking because he must depend wholly upon others for everything. A child never knows fear until he is taught it. His fearlessness in the presence of danger is superb, and is itself a powerful defense against the danger.

And then the trait to which the Master called special attention that day is most marked. Nothing can surpass the child-spirit of humility. There is an utter absence of any self-thinking or self-seeking. There is a fine lack of self-consciousness. The child has not yet become conscious of himself. There is no self-fire burning in his eye. His humility thus far is perfect. Humility is lack of self-consciousness. The child thinks wholly of others, so far as he has wakened up enough to think at all.

And simplicity adds its great charm. There is a perfect naturalness and frank directness

about a child that is wholly unaffected. The conventional standards and requirements of life are blessedly unknown, and so cannot disturb. There is no democratic simplicity equal to a child's. He knows no distinction of class or rank. Everyone is taken wholly upon his own merits. Man's stamp on the guinea is wholly ignored. Only the gold attracts. The child is the greatest of all levelers. All comers are received on the same footing.

And fully as marked as these, and as attractive, is the child's remarkable openness, its open-mindedness to all that comes. Indeed, he seems to be nothing but a huge opening, eagerly accepting and absorbing all that comes. He takes in all that comes as purest gospel. His questions are proverbial. And he is a wise parent who takes utmost pains to answer every question thoughtfully, and intelligently, and yet in simplest language, as he must do; even though it seem like taking a protracted post-graduate university course, with more variety than any such course ever knew.

The Babe is Telling the Glory of God.

These traits are to have a fierce fight for life as, with the growing years, the child comes more into contact with life, and as his powers of observation and absorption grow. Acquaintance

with sin and wrong and wavering moral standards, will threaten his native purity. Knowledge of danger and of the evil purposes of men breeds fear and distrust. Consciousness of self and of one's powers will tend very decidedly to teeter over into an undue sense of one's value.

With that will likely come an increasing lack of consciousness of God, through whose presence and touch only, can come full power in our native gifts. The artificial standards which run all through life will lay sharp, steady siege to his simplicity. Prejudices and superstitions and half-truths which he has accepted as purest gospel will seriously affect that rare openness of mind.

This is in some part a picture of the child as he comes to us fresh from the hand of God. Sin and fear, self-seeking and artificial distinctions, and the mind closed or partially closed by prejudice and misinformation and half-knowledge, are all acquired by touch with man, after he has left the hand of God.

God is still setting the child in our midst that we may learn all anew the rare likeness in which we were made. This is the fine maturity of character to grow in knowledge of life, and yet to retain the early winsome child traits.

To know sin, and yet keep pure; to know of danger and difficulty and the need of being keenly alert against them, and yet be unfaltering

in one's trust of the Father, and the outcome; to take one's place in the ranks, and play the full part assigned us with good self-reliance and full use of one's gifts, and yet to have the Master in so big that the thought of one's self falls into its true place, this is great achievement.

To know the proper, needful conventionalities and fit into them, and yet retain the sweet simplicity of the child spirit; to recognize the true worth of a man under all veneerings, and do full deference to all the Father's other children regardless of the accidental, outer trappings of gold or patch; and, maybe rarest of all, to keep an open mind to truth, in the midst of all the unconscious prejudices and preconceptions, from which no one seems wholly free,—all of this is to be growing up into the fine image of God. It is slow growth, too, but it may be sure and steady. And it takes very close companioning with the Original of the image, too. But He is very eager for that.

This child character is a bit of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. That glory, in the desert cloud and on the mount, in the shifting Tent and the Solomon temple, always cast an awe over the spirits of men as they looked. The heavens above, and the earth beneath, are telling that wondrous glory by night and by day. But His glory was seen most when Jesus walked among men in His simple, true humanity.

It is seen most to-day in the man and woman who in their fine matured strength retain these babe traits. And that glory may be seen daily in our midst, in the babe, with his sweet purity and unfailing trust, his humility and simplicity and openness. The babe is a new spirit fresh from the touch and from the presence of God, with His great wondrous glory just fresh upon his life.

"And sometimes I can plainly see
A glory fills the nursery;
The morning star shines in his eyes;
He answers far-off harmonies
With notes ethereal, exquisite,
So tender, joyous, thrilling-sweet,
The spirit's inward ear they reach
And tell me things past human speech." [1]

"Their Angels."

The babe is very near to God, and God is very near to the babe, very much nearer in actual truth than any of us know or think. The link between the two is very close. God is in the babe peculiarly. Is it because the babe is so much not understood and not appreciated even where he is tenderly loved? It may be so. Is it because he needs special guarding as he comes into the moral atmosphere of this earth, and of

[1] Ella Broadus Robertson.

some home where perhaps God hasn't His rightful place?

These may both be so. But it is very likely, too, that it is simply because God's Spirit enters every human being, and remains, blessing and guarding and guiding. As the years come, and the world atmosphere seeps in, God is less and less in evidence, more and more crowded out. He never leaves entirely until He is quite forced out. That is the very tail end of that man's career. Whenever His presence is recognized and gladly yielded to, there come the new sweet consciousness, and new life. But the thing to mark just now is the intimacy of God with the babe.

Just what did Jesus mean when He said, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me?"[1] Did he mean that kindness done to some child would be reckoned as done to Himself, and would be rewarded by Him? It may be so; quite likely. But more and more the words seem to mean simply this: that as the babe comes into the family, prayerfully planned for, eagerly longed for, and warmly welcomed, God comes in with him.

He that receiveth the babe into the home, as he was meant to be received, in His name whose life-giving touch is just fresh upon him, accepted as a sweet gift, and to be trained as a sacred life-

[1] Matthew xviii: 5.

trust, he will find that he has been receiving God Himself all anew into the home, too. God is in the babe.

And what did Jesus mean when, with that little child in His arms, or on His lap, He looked tenderly into the little pure face, and said, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father?"[1] The angels are God's messengers. They stand in His presence.[2] They are constantly passing from God's presence to earth to do His bidding, and constantly returning again to His presence. They never tire in their glad service of doing the Father's bidding in ministering to us men. This is their work.

This seems to be the only place where it is said that they see the Father's *face*. The phrase points to the intimacy between them and God. Jesus adds that peculiar reminder of the closeness of their touch with the Father in speaking of their relation to babes. What does He mean?

What can He mean but simply this: that an angel or a group of angels is appointed by the Father to the holy ministry of guarding each babe. And that these angels go up into the Father's very presence to tell of the babe, and receive fresh instructions, and then hasten back with glad feet to continue their precious min-

[1] Matthew xviii:10.

[2] Luke i:19; Revelation viii:2; Daniel vii:10.

istry. It means this with all the tenderness that such meaning can have: the babe is very much on God's heart; He is very dear to God.

"The baby has no skies
But mother's eyes;
Nor any God above,
But mother's love.
His angel sees the Father's face,
But he the mother's, full of grace;
And yet the heavenly kingdom is of such as this."[1]

Hurting a Child.

And as if to emphasize this all the more Jesus added this other word: "See that ye *despise* not one of these little ones."[2] The word the Master used means more than that word "despise." That word of ours means to think meanly of, or to scorn. The Master's word means yet more: see that you do not think either slightingly or lightly of them; do not fail to think much, and very highly of them. They are worthy of your best thought, whoever you are. Then comes the statement about the angels to show what the Father thinks of them.

"Despise" means what the disciples did when, another time, they rebuked the eager parents who

[1] John B. Tabb.
[2] Matthew xviii:10.

brought their children to Jesus for His blessing.[1] In their ignorance and thoughtlessness the disciples feared that the children were not worthy of so much thought. They feared the Master would only be bothered. Poor men! Jesus was "moved with indignation"; more literally, He was pained or distressed. Ah! the Master taught that they are worthy of the best thought of the best trained brain. They are very dear to God, and were to Jesus when He was here, and should be to all of us.

And the child is peculiarly open to God. The child heart and ear naturally open upward. They hear readily, and believe easily. The roadway of the ear has not been beaten down hard by much travel. It is still soft and impressionable because of the dew and the gentle rain of God's direct touch. The world's sun has not yet gotten in to dry and parch and harden.

The child nature is peculiarly sensitive to God. He is born with a nature open to God. Instances are numerous of children, in the very young tender years, talking to God in a way that shows how real He is to them, and of their going off alone to pray when not aware of being noticed. The answers of very young children to questions about God are often surprisingly intelligent.

And while this has sometimes grown with the

[1] Mark x:13-16.

years, many times, maybe most times, as they have gotten a bit older, and mingled more with people, and absorbed the outside moral atmosphere, this simple faith in God, and eagerness for Him, and consciousness of His presence and care have gradually gone away.

Was this what Jesus meant when, in that same famous child passage[1] we have been quoting, He uttered the solemn warning against those who cause these little ones to stumble? The heartlessness of putting out your foot to trip up the innocent confiding child, and send him sprawling, to carry scars to the end, and never to get quite back to the early simple faith! And yet so common.

The Babe's First Request.

The babe is a messenger. He is a new messenger straight from God to the home where he comes. If we would but remember, and look, and listen, we would see so much, and hear so much blessed teaching. The babe begins his teaching mission before he comes. Being born is one of the few things with which we have nothing to do. We have no choice in being born, nor in the matter of the sex, the place, nor the class of society into which we shall be born.

[1] Matthew xviii:1-11.

And yet if the babe could express a preference, would not we, who give him birth, be greatly influenced by his choice? If father and mother would habitually soften their spirit, so as to hear the inaudible voices in the air that do speak to us, and try to catch their babe's wish long before he is here, what would they hear?

Well, he would ask earnestly that no element of chance enter into his coming; and yet more earnestly, that nothing but the purest, highest motives and desires lie back of his being given life. He would ask that, for his own sake, he be brought into his great inheritance of life in the way that his divine Father planned and plans.

Then he would surely remind us of how helpless he will be at the first, and for many months and years. He would ask that the whole plan of the home life be thoughtfully arranged, that after he has come he may enter into his full inheritance of physical vigor; for so only could he fulfil his mission as babe and growing child.

He would ask that the moral air in the home, which he must breathe, be wholesomely pure and sweet, and strong, because he will absorb that air whatever it may be, and be made by it. And then he would surely ask that his training be thought of, and provided for, that so he may enter into his full heritage of mental power. So he will be able to do well his share of the

world's work, and be keener in his enjoyment and appreciation of the world's beauty and sweets. This is a bit of what the babe will teach long before he comes, if we will train the ears of our hearts, in the soft solitude of the spirit-world, to listen.

The Babe Preacher.

And with his arrival the teaching comes thick and fast. The babe is God's gospel of life spelled out all anew for us. Our love for the babe tells of the other father-mother love. What can equal the love for the babe among almost all classes of people? The unwearying attendance, the broken sleep, sometimes the sleepless nights, the dropping of everything else to attend to his wants, the tender touch, the yearning of heart over him, the ceaseless breathing out of love in the innumerable ways and things in which the human heart reveals itself,—is there any human love quite like it?

That's a bit of the babe's gospel teaching. That is the way God feels toward us, only He is so much more. His is the original love. All of our love for the babe is breathed down into us by Him. There's much more, and much tenderer and stronger where this comes from. We have not exhausted the supply, nor made it less, nor poorer in quality.

And then the babe's helplessness is a great teaching. His helplessness is really pathetic. He can't do a thing for himself except breathe and suck milk. And the breathing is involuntary. And the milk must be put into his mouth for him. Everything must be done for him, including his thinking. His very helpless dependence teaches the listening heart continually.

All unconsciously our babe-teacher is saying, "This is what you're like." And the more we listen to him and think, the more we realize the startling truth of this little, God-sent preacher's message. The strongest, most self-reliant of us is utterly helpless of himself. The very breath of life is being actually supplied to us all the time by Another. We are just as dependent upon Him as the babe upon his parents. Without attention and care the child would quickly die. Without our Father's constant care we would as surely slip the tether of life.

And of course helplessness spells trust. The babe trusts absolutely. What else can he do? He must live a life of trust from the first breath on. And that is God's plan for us. We grow in knowledge, and in ability, and in skill in managing our affairs, but we never grow beyond the need of trusting as fearlessly, and fully, and in as practical ways, as the babe must do.

And both the helplessness and trust tell of the other side, a Helper, and One who can be

trusted. God is "a very present help in trouble," [1] and when there is no trouble that we know about. And He can be trusted. God is absolutely trustworthy and dependable.

And the babe purity tells of the Father's plan for us, and of His eager yearning, and more, of what He will do for us if He may. Whatever of evil may come into one's life, comes in after he leaves the creating hand of God. We were made pure, though of course with the possibility of sin in our freedom of choice. Whether there be any taint of original sin in the babe, and just what that means, we may safely leave entirely with the theologians to thresh out behind seminary walls. It is enough practically for us to remember that God reckons only with our choices. He made us pure. He longs to have us pure. He will re-make us pure in heart, and increasingly pure in life, if we'll but let Him. The babe is our sweet unconscious teacher here.

And this babe-preacher plainly includes sacrifice in his teaching. Life can come only as another's life is given. Sometimes it comes only as the other life is given utterly out. This is one of the saddest of life's tragedies, when the mother goes as the babe comes. But even when that extreme is spared, still life costs life. Life comes out of life, with suffering as a companion. There can be no life without sacrifice.

[1] Psalm xlvi:1.

It will not be difficult for the thoughtful father and mother, in the lamplight of their own experience, to find enough letters in the word "cradle," brought to them by their babe, to spell out the infinitely greater word "Calvary."

And life can continue only as life is given continually, and can become strong only as strength is given out of a strong life. A wonderful preacher is this babe fresh from the school of God.

And so the teaching goes on more and more as the tender month-counting stage runs into the only less tender year-counting telling of age. Through all the fascinations of change and growth from infancy up to young manhood and womanhood it constantly changes, but never quits.

Some Blessed Sermons.

Everybody can bring up incidents here full of sweet teachings. A young father was wakened early one morning, while it was still dark, by his young son in the cradle at his side, asking for a drink. When his thirst was satisfied, and the father had lain down again, the little fellow asked if he might sing. But his singing became so lusty that an embargo had to be put upon the service of song for the sake of the other sleepers.

There was silence for a brief moment. Then it was broken again by the child's voice. "Father." "Yes, little lad." "Is your face turned this way?" And, with his heart strangely stirred and warmed, the father tenderly said, "Yes, laddie." And the night shined as the light, for the boy, because of his father's face. Ah! If we would remember that the Father's face is always turned this way. If ever we don't see clearly, it's because of our face's turning, not His.

One evening a little girl went to her father with a troubled face, and quivering lip, and said, "Papa, is God dead?" He was a Christian man, but had grown cold in his Christian life. One evidence of it was that family prayers in which he had once been faithful, had been omitted entirely. When the troubled face looked up into his with the strange question, he was surprised, and said, "Why, no, dear, why do you ask such a question?" "Because you never talk to him any more the way you used to do." And the little unconscious preacher for God, with her troubled eyes, led her father into a new life.

A little fellow was just learning to spell, and was eagerly using his new knowledge all the time. His father was an infidel of the common sort that boasts of the infidelity and tries to push it on others. He had hung up a motto

on the wall of his home. It read, "God is nowhere."

The child's eye wandered to the motto, and he commenced spelling: "G-o-d God, i-s is, n-o-w now, h-e-r-e here. God is now here." If a voice had suddenly spoken out of the clouds the father could not have been more surprised at the new meaning of his motto, nor more startled in spirit. His early training had been Christian. The result was that he adopted his son's spelling for life. "A little child shall lead them." [1] Is not the child God's best preacher?

A widowed mother was talking with her four-year-old daughter one evening. The father had died when the child was but a babe. The mother felt her loss very keenly. She had taught the little one faithfully about Jesus, and His care of us. And the teaching was taken with all the literalness of a child's understanding and interpretation.

This evening the mother was a bit depressed in spirit, and talking half to the child, and half to herself, she exclaimed, "Oh! I don't know how we shall ever get along without father." And God's little preacher looked up into her mother's face so earnestly and said so simply, "Why, mother, Jesus will take care of us." And a new warming sense of the power of what she had taught her daughter came into the mother's

[1] Isaiah xi:6.

heart to steady and strengthen her, and still abides with her.

"A tender child of summers three,
Seeking her little bed at night,
Paused on the dark stair timidly.
'Oh! mother! take my hand,' said she,
'And then the dark will all be light.'

"We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before;
And only when our hands we lay,
Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness nevermore.

"Reach downward to the sunless days,
Wherein our guides are blind as we,
And faith is small and hope delays;
Take Thou the hands of prayer we raise,
And let us feel the light of Thee!" [1]

And the babe is not limited in his blessed preaching to the immediate family circle. His influence upon the outer life of the world is immense. He affects the whole world's life through the inner circle. And he touches that outer circle directly, too, with a peculiarly potent subtle touch. Wherever a babe is taken, men will pay him deference. They will give special deference to a mother because of the babe in her arms. The look of that little new face influences all sorts of men and women far more than they show, and really more than they know.

[1] John Greenleaf Whittier.

"Full hard his face; for pelf and place,
Rough rivalry in bargains keen
Had made the man a mere machine
To grind and get of profits net
Enough to keep his balance clean.
To such a face a baby smiled;
The thing of iron became a child!

"Full false her face; with rapid pace
The alchemy of Fashion's wiles,
Transforming graces into guiles,
Made beauty's tryst, once angel-kissed,
The sportive haunt of hollow smiles.
Yet lo, when baby laughed and cooed
A soul from out that face was wooed!

"So any face, how low or base,
How marred or scarred by any ill,
To semblance of God's image will
Return again the instant when
Of baby's smile it drinks its fill.
For baby's smile is Love's device
To lure us back to Paradise!"[1]

A Rare Experience.

It was our rare privilege at one time to have intrusted to our care for some weeks a sick babe. The wee morsel of humanity coming so completely in our life brought sweet influences that affected us greatly, and will continue to for all time. We shall always count that experience one of the blessings to give devout thanks for,

[1] Louis M. Waterman.

and one of the trainings whose power upon us has been beyond calculation. It is enshrined as one of the hallowed times.

Yet it cost us much. For one of us it meant sleepless nights, practically sleepless, while the babe was being watched and prayerfully studied, until the coveted habit of sleep, which the little fellow needed so sorely, began to be well fixed. And after that it meant always broken sleep that his needs might be attended to. It meant unremitting, thoughtful care and devotion every waking hour of the twenty-four, and the keenest thinking at command.

For that little while our life was poured out into the babe in countless ways. The new life and vigor that quickly came to him was really our life given to him. He drew out the tenderest love, and proved to be a worthy subject for the best powers of observation and study we could rally. And without doubt he brought to us unwittingly a new keenness of observation and of thinking.

Daily he made us feel that the babe is worthy of the best brain power of the best equipped and trained man and woman. What finesse and diplomacy and patience and tireless giving out of strength he did take! We gave much and we felt the giving, too. But we received far more than we gave. We felt that, too, blessedly felt it, and have been feeling it ever since.

Every mother, who is a mother in heart as well as in name, knows the old story. And every father should know a great deal of it, though he never knows quite as much as the mother. But the more he knows of it the better a father will he be, the stronger and manlier a man, the keener and more thoughtful and gentler in all his contacts. Every duty done, whether as business man, or citizen, or in social life, will bear the impress of the larger, finer man grown within him by such experience.

Life's Best Finishing School.

Into the inner chamber of privilege and training with the child from babyhood on, we would, if we could, woo many a man, who has a child but is not a father, and many a woman whose child has yet to know a real mother, for their own sakes, as well as for the babe's. The admission fee at the door is very high. Mere money never gets admission; only life tinged with its own spilling. The doorkeeper is very insistent on being paid. There is daily toll to be paid, too,—red toll, given, like the Spirit, without measure, and poured out without stint.

But there are precious secrets of heart and brain and life in that inner room never gotten elsewhere. Here is the keenest stimulant for the brain; for love is the best brain tonic, and a

mother's best of all. And with the stimulant goes rare opportunity for the culture of the mental powers. There is that rarest of all social polishing,—gentle consideration, fine self-control, and kindly regard for others, which underlies all true courtliness.

Here, too, is opportunity for a divinity course really divine, the nearest to first hand it is possible to get down here, such as the seminary never offered nor can, with such freshness and warmth of treatment as to attract all hearts.

But the doorway in is very narrow. And of the multitudes of those who have borne children it must be said, with gentle softness, but faithful plainness, few there be that go in thereat. Yet the number increases daily. Though the fees are high, and the requirements exacting, the enriched life, and trained thought, and sweetened spirit, and strengthened will, and broadened outlook, and mellowed sympathy with all men, make all payments seem small afterwards, and the requirements easy.

And the two teachers, the babe and the unseen Head-master, bring such sweets of friendship as had not been dreamed possible. Yet one needs to keep very, very close to the Head-master, and to practice great patience, for only so do these finest results come.

HEREDITY: THE INFLUENCES THAT GO BEFORE.

The Lineal Face.
Fascinating Possibilities.
The Help of Heredity.
"The Blood is the Life."
Precious, Awful Power.
Deciding the Life-bent.
The Brooding Father.

"Oh, wondrous mystery of motherhood!
That with one life another should be blent
In union perfect, till each good intent
Or thought of ill that drives away the good,
The mother's strong desire or wayward mood,
Should, to the soul unborn, a secret bent
For good, or ill, impart."

HEREDITY.

The Lineal Face.

The child is born an heir. He is heir to all that is in two long family lines. Some part of his inheritance he never may, almost certainly, never will, come into. But it is quite impossible to say what part he won't come into, and what part he will. It is always within the possibilities, and never outside of the probabilities, that he may come into any part of that heritage.

He is a composite of his ancestral line, the latest composite, containing more than any previous one. All that has entered into the make-up of those who have gone before on each side intermingles and comes together in him. The characteristics and peculiarities, the gifts and powers and quirks are all there. All will not appear in him. But you can't tell what will appear, and what won't.

A few years ago composite photography had quite a run. The members of a college class, or a society, or other such group, would be photographed in turn, each face being photographed

on top of the previous photograph, so that all eyes would come together, and so with each of the features. In that way it was sought to get the type of the whole group. The results were always of intense interest, especially to the members of the group, each of whom had given of himself to make up the type.

The child is something like that. All the faces that have gone before of two long lines look out of the child's face. They will look out more and more as he matures, and increases in maturity. Some of these faces we will never recognize; others will be quickly recognized. If we knew more of the past generations we would recognize more. Some features never reappear. Some one face may stand out most of all. But you can never tell what face and what feature of a face will appear most strongly.

Fascinating Possibilities.

The babe is a composite, immediately and most, of his parents. He is more than either, because he is all of both. He is all that they both are, plus their undeveloped possibilities, their dormant powers, and minus their prejudices and superstitions. He is the essence of all the preceding generations. More strains come together, and blend, and inter-act, in him than in either father or mother, or in any ancestor, for

he includes them all. Two lines are heading up anew in this new babe.

The possibilities of the new life are endless and fascinating. The changes of transmission run into unceasing variety. Some part of what has lain asleep in father and mother may wake up into vigorous life in the child. A power or trait that has been dormant through one, or many generations, may come out again, and come out with more vigor than before.

What has been alert and active in parents may be dormant in the child. Or, it may reappear in a much more decided form, or in a less decided. The good may be better, or not so good; the bad worse, or less bad; the strength stronger, or less so; the weakness more marked, or less; the talent be of a finer sort, or not so fine; the inclination or mood more pronounced, or not so much so.

Then the new combination of the union of the two parents may work out new characteristics in the child. There may come just the combination that lifts talent up into the realm of genius. What has been a steady plodding trait in the father may, in combination with the blood of the mother, reappear as a brilliant inspirational gift. So geniuses are born of commonplace people. And so, on the other side, commonplace persons are born of those marked by genius.

Then, too, what has been held in check by the parents may reappear, or disappear. Through the restraint of conventionality, or by years of hard self-discipline, or by God's grace working with the discipline, or by any two of these, or all three combined, much that is undesirable may have been restrained in the parents' life. Any of this may reappear in the child in equal or less or greater vigor; or may disappear. A marvel of possibility is this child whom we have brought into life. And a great problem he is, for endless, keen, patient study, and for unceasing, steady prayer.

The Help of Heredity.

There are a good many thoughtful men in educational circles, who are disposed to make little or nothing of heredity, and everything of training. There'll be more to say of their emphasis on training when we come to that talk. There is no doubt at all that some have overemphasized the heredity side in their study of life.

All things should be kept in proportion. The common pendulum swing, first one extreme then the other, should be avoided. Heredity can be taught in an extreme way, that will produce in some a sort of morbid fatalism that checks all growth. That's bad, of course. But

then it mustn't be left out, because it can't be. It won't stay out. It's in, and in to stay. Heredity supplies the stuff to be trained. But it can be studied in a purely practical way, and that is all that concerns us here.

The word "heredity" stands for all the influences that enter into the making of character *before birth.* And there is an intensely practical side to it for us who are past that line, because it concerns the making of our own character; and, even more, it concerns the making of the character of the lives that we are to bring.

It puts a man on his guard at once to know of evil or weak tendencies he may have inherited. Forewarned is forearmed. The man whose father had a strong appetite for intoxicants, not always controlled, knows at once that he must be far more cautious and stern with himself than one who has no such taint in his blood. He will wisely lean over backwards to avoid that which would have an easier task to grip and throw him, if it once got an opening.

If one's father has been an easy spender, unable to hold money in his fingers; or, has gone to the extreme of closeness in the use of his money, that will influence the child. But to know of the bent either way will help an earnest man to avoid the inherited tendency which he may find cropping out above the soil of his life, and it will help him, too, to avoid swinging to

the very opposite extreme, as is so often done.

It helps greatly, to remember that the inheritance is a tendency only; nothing more. The child doesn't inherit a disease, though he may inherit a tendency toward it. The tendency of whatever sort may be very strong. Yet it is only a tendency in the beginning. So all inherited traits are tendencies, more or less strong.

The early atmosphere, and then the habit, and then greatest of all, the will, decide what shall become of that tendency. The tendency toward an evil thing can be gripped and choked if it is known. The tendency toward a good trait can be guarded, or carelessly weakened, or wilfully destroyed, or it can be built up.

At the same time it is an enormous advantage to the earnest, ambitious young man or young woman to know of strong, desirable traits and tendencies inherited. It gives an element of confidence in developing one's character in those directions; though care should be taken not to presume on heredity here. For the inherited tendency which makes a thing easier must be cultivated and schooled if it is to grow into real strength in its own right.

"The Blood is the Life."

But important and practical as all this is, there is something else vastly more important,

and of yet more intense practicality. And that is this: we may give to our children the sort of heredity we want them to have. We do give them a heredity, their chief heredity. We make their character; not wholly, but practically so. The generation that gives birth to the child is the most potent of all in influencing his character. It is more than all previous generations put together. All preceding generations exert an influence. There can be no question of that.

But we who give the child its life have the most to say as to just what that life shall be in every regard, physically, and mentally, and in the spirit that animates and controls. This at once makes heredity an immensely practical affair. This is the chief side of the question in which we are interested here. But our interest is warm to the point of being hot, and hot to the degree of white heat.

What we *are* makes our child's inheritance. His physical character,—health and vigor and traits; his mental powers and tastes and tendencies; his habit of being thoughtful or thoughtless, thorough or shallow, generous or close, frugal or shiftless, cheery or gloomy, methodical or slovenly,—these will largely get their bent from us, in what we are. His thought of God, and attitude toward Him, His prayerfulness, and purposefulness, and devotion, will

come in no small degree by blood inheritance. The babe becomes a second edition of his parents. What we are in ourselves determines very largely what he shall be in himself.

Now, this is true of our whole life. It is never too early to be thinking of this, for the whole sweep of the life is included. From the time when we begin making choices, and so making character, we are making up the heritage of other lives that some day will be here.

There can be no question that the rebellion of Absalom, which nearly broke up the Hebrew nation, and affected the entire after-life of the people, and sadly embittered the rest of David's years, was in David's blood long before it broke out in his son's actions. The chapter of ugly things that went before that rebellion had already been written by David's hand, in his own life, by his own choice.

Amnon's unholy passion, his cowardly indulging of it, and contemptible treatment of his half-sister; Absalom's lawless and bloody revenge, and then the rebellion itself,—all this was simply a working out of tendencies received from a father and pushed out to their logical conclusion. They could have been wholly restrained by training, but then they weren't.

One of the most famous illustrations of the power of heredity is that of Hannah and her son Samuel. It's a relief to turn to it from the

later David story. For here the influence was all good. And the blessing of it affected the whole nation for long years after. It is the more striking because plainly the whole affair was of God's planning, in order to be able to carry out His broader plans for the nation. He must carry out those plans through some human channel. And He used heredity to get the right sort of a man.

While there is no means of counting exact years, it is quite likely that Hannah's soul-trying experiences ran through at least ten years, and maybe a much longer time. Those experiences were her childlessness, which every Hebrew woman peculiarly felt to be a reproach; the contemptible picking and nagging of her constantly for years by the rival wife of the home because of that childlessness; her own sore bitterness of spirit, notwithstanding her husband's tenderness; the drawing out of her soul to God in intense yearning prayer for relief that didn't come; and then at the last the vow of dedication in the Tabernacle.

Those experiences running through long years re-made Hannah. She was no longer the woman she had been. God had made her over new. But it took much time, and very trying experiences to do it. He had to begin back with a woman, and patiently wait for her to be changed, in order to get the sort of man that He

could use as a leader, to swing the nation back to Himself, and save His plan for a world.

Samuel was the son of the new Hannah made by those years of patient training and gentle discipline. He stands in one of the worst gaps in Israel's history, and saved the nation, and the world-plan that centered in the nation. Samuel is one of the greatest illustrations of the power of a mother to make a son what he comes to be.

Precious, Awful Power.

But while one's whole life affects the heritage there is a potent period of singular significance. That is the time when the processes of nature have their beginnings. The conditions that prevail at this time contain a distinct prophetic forecast of what shall be in another. The thoughtfulness that makes us eager to be in life at all times what we would have our precious loved ones be should have special emphasis now. Sweetest purity of heart and thought, the prayerful reverence and humility of the truest saint, and sturdiest strength of purpose, should be simply and naturally but earnestly reached out after. For some one else bearing the image of God, will also bear the bodily and mental and spirit image of man.

The influence exerted by the mother is great

beyond the power of our minds to think, or of our words to tell. The making of the child's character is in the mother's hands to a degree that is nothing short of startling. She actually may make her child just what she chooses to. A human life, in its physical characteristics, its mental gifts and powers, and its dominant spirit, is being made by her in the holy laboratory of nature.

The greatest influence we can exert is through what we *are*. This is peculiarly true of the mother, and peculiarly true of her at this time. Her moods and bent of mind and habits are being woven into another life. It should be a time of quiet confidence in God, of tender love, and of cheeriest spirit. Special attention given to special subjects will have marked results. Illustrations are abundant of mothers giving a decided bent to a child's tastes at that time, as for example by the study of music.

While it is commonly said, and truly so, that grace is not hereditary, yet without doubt a mother may wholly and radically affect her child's religious life at that time. That was exactly what Hannah did. Her spirit of devotion to God, her glad acquiescence in His plan for her son's life, the whole attitude of her spirit, earnest, humble and reverent, were reproduced in Samuel.

"Vaguely through my blood it moved,
Somewhat as a dream;
Then at times more sharply stirred
In that pulsing stream.

"By and by, it sought to rise
Upward as on wings;
Save for it, my heart had missed
Touch with higher things.

"Yea, and had it not been there
In my hour of need,
I had not withdrawn my hand
From a slavish deed.

"Ah, the gifts that one at birth
From his mother gains!
This for me,—that prayer was wrought
Subtly in my veins."[1]

There's a bit of testimony regarding this that comes from a strange unexpected source, in a word spoken by Jerry McAuley. He founded the Water Street Rescue Mission in New York City, now the Jerry McAuley Mission. Its work is entirely one of rescue. Drunkards and thieves and bad men and women of every sort have been blessedly rescued to a new life through its activity. There is no more difficult task than winning that class of people permanently away from their old haunts and habits.

McAuley himself had fallen some five times or so before finding his feet permanently.

[1] S. T. Livingston.

Speaking of these great difficulties he said, "I have never been able to do much with a man who didn't have a Christian mother." It's a significant bit of testimony from such a man, and out of such a quarter.

Two cultured women were engaged in earnest conversation. The one was a mother who carried a broken heart about with her because of her wayward son. He ran to the excess of riot in evil habit, and the keen distress and cutting pain of it tugged endlessly at her heart. Their conversation ran into serious things. And she spoke of her son and her sore heart. And then she exclaimed, "Is it not strange? how can you explain such a thing? His father is a good man. We have always lived proper lives. How is it possible that a son of such parents should develop such traits?"

The other woman was one who had thought deeply into such matters. Turning to her friend she spoke quietly of the immeasurable, subtle power of prenatal influence, and the unfailing certainty of its workings. Then with gentle tactfulness and yet pointed plainness, she pointed out, in a very quiet voice, that every one's character is traceable directly to just such influences much more than is commonly supposed, even by the more thoughtful. As the mother listened keenly an utterly new light broke, and what had been a mystery regarding her son began to clear.

He was not an exception to the common law of life. What he was had come to him in its incipiency through a perfectly logical sequence.

Yet such blame is not wholly the parents'. Were there more teaching of a practical sort about heredity, even in a small way, the effect would be immeasurably great, and only good. Ignorance leads to thoughtlessness, and that to far worse. And yet such thoughtlessness must always seem strange.

Deciding the Life-bent.

Pure living beforehand is more than a lifetime of agonizing prayer afterwards. Each has its own ministry and influence. The pure life beforehand isn't enough. It needs the praying afterwards to accomplish the desired results. And praying afterwards without the pure life is awfully handicapped. It must try to carry two loads, its own and another's. It has a far more difficult task to perform. That task will take much longer time, and greater steadiness and insistence because of increased resistance.

One of the greatest illustrations of a mother's power to affect radically her child's bent of mind and whole career is found in the life-story of one of the most noted infidels of recent times. He was a brilliant orator, a cultured gentleman, and with a peculiarly stubborn type of infidelity

which overcast all his thinking. Yet acquaintance with his prenatal condition would have surely awakened a real sympathy which could have greatly helped.

His father was a clergyman of an old type now fortunately much less common than once. He preached a stern, severe, unlovable theology. And, as if it cast a spell over him, he showed the same sort of a spirit in his home, making it utterly miserable. The brunt of it all came upon the mother, of course. It affected her sorely and sadly. During the time when this son was maturing to birth she was in bitterness of soul, doubting if there could be a God after all. And in such an atmosphere her son was being moulded during all of those tenderly impressionable months.

Can one wonder at his bent of mind, and the peculiar stubbornness of his skepticism? That was a horrid heredity. It could have been overcome without doubt to a very large degree. But even though overcome to the extent of acceptance of Christian truth, without question there would have been a distinct effect upon his whole mentality clear to the end.

But there are fully as many striking instances of the sort that bring cheer and gladness, if not more. Though there's a David blot on the old pages of this precious God-book, there is a Hannah spot of unusual brightness. If there be a

crafty Rebecca making a contemptible Jacob, there is a Joseph, son of the later, better man that grew up in Jacob. There is a Jeremiah,[1] and a Paul[2] called of God while yet under that potent prenatal influence, and in all likelihood called through that influence. It is no matter of mere chance that the teller of the story in these sacred pages so often records the names of the mothers of its leading men.

"Oh, wondrous mystery of motherhood!
That with one life another should be blent
In union perfect, till each good intent
Or thought of ill that drives away the good;
The mother's strong desire or wayward mood,
Should, to the soul unborn, a secret bent
For good, or ill, impart. When, heaven-sent,
Before the Virgin blest the angel stood,
And to her, meek, submissive, did impart
That she the hope of all mankind should bear;
Tho' reassured that not a thought of guile
Should mar that perfect life; yet, must her heart
Have sought release from sin, in constant prayer,
Lest she, by aught impure, his life defile."[3]

The Brooding Father.

And the father's part during this critical time is only less than that of the mother. If the mother's influence be the greater at this time, his is yet very great, beyond any power to esti-

[1] Jeremiah i:4. [2] Galatians 1:15.
[3] May Barnes Clarke.

mate, or words to try to tell. His attitude toward the mother has great influence upon her, and so upon the child. If ever a man acts well the part of lover it should be at that time. His eager forethought for her comfort, and to spare her strength, his tenderness of touch, and his lover devotedness,—the breathing of a warm fresh love into her life daily, will have enormous influence.

And his thought toward the coming child will be moulding him directly. He can as really be brooding over the child in spirit and prayer, as the mother is actually. And the effect will be incalculably great.

There is a striking story that came to us out of real life, at very close range, that illustrates not only the influence of the mother upon the child, but the marked influence of another upon the mother and so in turn upon the child. The story came to us from a friend who got it directly, a number of years ago, from the woman who tells the story.

This woman was an English woman who came to the United States to join the Brook Farm Community at West Roxbury, Boston, Massachusetts. After being there awhile she decided to go to California, and it was on the way out there that the incident came to her of which she told our friend. It was in the early days of the settling of our West, when the first railroads

were being built across the Mississippi Valley states.

This English woman had gotten as far as the Middle West on her journey, when indisposition led her to leave the train to rest for a few days. She stopped in the only home, that of the man who kept the railroad station, and who combined crude hotel-keeping with his other occupation. There was no town. The man and his wife and children were all quite common, ordinary people, with one exception.

The youngest child was totally different from all the others. She seemed a being of a different world. Fine features, keen thoughtful eyes, the quickness and lightness of a bird in movement, and a gentle refined spirit, gave her a distinction, of which of course she was not conscious, but which stood out all the more strikingly because of the contrast with the other children, and with her father and mother.

The visitor noticed this constantly, and then made bold to speak of it. The mother said gently, with a touch of reverence in her manner, "She is the child of a woman lying out under that tree over yonder," pointing to a gravestone not far off. "Oh! she is my own daughter, but she was made so different from the others by that woman's influence." Then she told the story.

The woman had been traveling west, and be-

ing taken sick was compelled to leave the train at this point, and lived in the home as the latter woman was doing. That was several months before the child was born. Her sickness continued for a number of months. It was during the open part of the year. She used to sit out under the trees reading and talking with the mother of the child. One of her favorite books was Scott's poems, and her favorite poem, "The Lady of the Lake."

She would read aloud, or have her hostess read to her, when unable to read herself. She would talk of the lady in the story until the mother of the child came to idealize the lady of the poem as the perfection of sweet, young womanhood. Her eye and heart were filled with the vision of fair Ellen as Scott so winsomely pictures her:

"The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain
With head up-raised, and look intent,
With eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seemed to stand
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

"And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of fairer form, or lovelier face:
. . . . . .

A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so clear,
The listener held his breath to hear!

"A Chieftain's daughter seemed the maid,
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betray'd.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care;
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North."[1]

No doubt this woman's talk was a very large part of the influence. After months the woman grew weaker, and then died, and was tenderly

[1] "The Lady of the Lake," Scott.

laid away under the tree, and her grave marked. Soon after this child was born, and named Ellen, and grew up into the child the English woman had admired so much. Is it not a winsome tale out of life? Coming to us so directly it has all the peculiar force of a bit of real life.

There was shown in a remarkable way the power that one person may exert upon another's child at that impressionable time. Not only had the mother shaped the child, but the other had shaped the mother, and so in turn the child had been shaped. The thoughtful father can exert both sorts of influence upon his child, directly by his own thought and spirit, and indirectly but tremendously upon the mother.

Did Mary brood prayerfully over the wondrous babe those long months before He came? Who can doubt it? Did Joseph brood tenderly over Mary as one intrusted to him by God, and, in his heart brood over the coming child? Who can doubt that? Did the Father above brood over both human mother and divine Son all those months? Who doubts that?

We may yield ourselves habitually to our Father's brooding presence, and so be being made afresh into His image. And as we brood habitually over the coming one, the image being imprinted anew from within and above upon us, shall come to that new face that by and by shall look up into ours.

TRAINING; THE INFLUENCES THAT COME AFTER.

The University of Arabia.
The Value of Training.
Blood and Training.
A Study in Shoes.
A Three-fold Cord.
Street Weeds.
The Heart Touch Upon the Mind.
The Home Atmosphere.
The Child a Mirror of His Parents.
The Home University.
Waking a Queen.

"Lord, let me make this rule,
To think of life as school,
And try my best
To stand each test,
And do my work,
And nothing shirk.

* * * * * * *

These lessons Thou dost give
To teach me how to live,
To do, to bear,
To get and share,
To work and play,
And trust alway."

Maltbie Davenport Babcock.

TRAINING.

The University of Arabia.

School begins at birth, and ends—when? ever? never, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come. Not the school of books and benches. That begins its sessions later, and lets out earlier. But the higher school of atmosphere and surroundings, of personal influence and the give and take of common life.

The common experiences of life are invaluable in moulding character. The boy David went to a training school for kings, though he didn't know it. As he faithfully went his commonplace shepherd round, out in the open, tending his dumb charges, skilfully guiding, bravely guarding, he was in training for higher shepherd duties.

Experiences that test and sift offer the finest opportunities for the making of strong character. Young Joseph went to the University of Egypt, with a prison-house for a school-room. The teaching was all done by the Head-master Himself. There was no class-work. It was all indi-

vidual instruction. He had the Teacher all to himself. That is the plan of instruction in the school of life. And when he graduated he was ready for the premiership of a world-power.

Moses' education was in three courses, home, school, and God; with his mother, with the university professors, and then with the sheep and the stars and God. His mother taught him love and patriotism; the professors, science and arts, literature and law. The desert course was all seminar work; it took him back of the university work to the original sources.

His mother trained his heart, the teachers his mental powers, God taught and trained his spirit. The home taught him love, and love of right; the University of Egypt, mental culture; the University of Arabia, self-mastery through God-mastery. A man may get along without the school course, though he is much stronger and better with it. But no man's education is complete until he has been trained by a love-taught woman, and by God.

No man ever amounts to much who hasn't had something of a course in the University of Arabia—the schooling of hard experience. Pure Joseph, patient Moses, fiery Elijah, rugged John the Herald, versatile Paul,—tent-maker and preacher, sturdy Luther, lonely Morrison, brave Judson amid the privations of Burmah, even the divine Son Himself—these are a few of the dis-

tinguished graduates. But there's many another, less known, who did as good school-work there, and gave as good an account of himself. Carey's cobbling shop, Bunyan's tinker-shop and prison cell, and Paton's cotton-loom did fine training work.

Your wilderness course may be within four narrow walls with the upward look easiest physically, or, within a small village or town, or a commonplace shop, or a humble house, or in some daily drudge round. But remember that's only the school-room. The finest training has been done in the homeliest school-rooms. The chief thing is the presence of the Head-master, and of a willing, hard-working pupil. You can be sure of the first, and you can make sure of the second.

The Value of Training.

But the greatest training is of the child. It is greatest because the stuff is so open to impression. Whatever is put in sticks. The impression made then stays, and stays to the end. The work goes in deepest, and lasts longest. Training a child is the highest and holiest and most fascinating of all occupations. And it takes the most heart power and brain power combined of any, too.

The babe is a mute eloquent appeal for a

teacher, and for the best there is. He is a blank sheet of white paper waiting the first pen that comes. That sheet will take whatever is written upon it, the merest scrawl, or the finest copper-plate engraving; the most ungrammatical crudity, or the polished sentence.

The babe may be more when he is a babe in possibility, than at any later time actually. Or he may go on becoming more. Every life is a story of the ascent of man, or the descent, according to the training, or the lack of it. Sometimes one looks at a babe, and then at his parents, and wonders how such a babe was born to such parents. He seems so much finer a bit of humanity than they.

It is because he starts in where they did, but they grew up untrained, and knew no self-training, and have distinctly shrunk mentally and morally. They have become each simply a bundle of ignorances and prejudices and shiftless purposelessness. Their child stands for the point whence they started to go down. Training makes the life story one of the ascent of a man; the lack of it of the going down of a man.

Through heredity the child is more than either parent, for he is all of both. Through training he may be *made* more than either, and more than both. He should begin where they are at the time of his birth. The child that does not be-

come more than his parents becomes less, because he begins with more, even though he may not be to blame.

He stands on his parents' shoulders and should reach higher up. The parents should expect their child to be more and better. They ought to plan for that. It is a distinct drop when it turns out otherwise. The child must be better to be as good. But it all depends upon the training.

Someone has figured out the possible value of a bit of raw iron worth five dollars, according to the work put upon it. As iron ore it is worth five dollars, and will remain so if left alone. If made into horseshoes it will increase in market value to twelve dollars according to this reckoning; if into needles, to three hundred and fifty dollars; if into watch-springs, to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

The changes made by skilled work upon that precious bit of humanity, the child, may not be so easily figured out. There's a market value, too, but the values run much lower, and much higher. The child may become a charge upon the State, and a menace to society.

He may become a common day-laborer valued only for muscular strength; or, a skilled workman combining brain with hand and muscle; or, a trainer of skilled men. Or, he may become a thinker, making work for thousands;

or, a leader, moulding the lives of the crowd for good, with his value to society beyond what dollars can buy or figures tell.

Blood and Training.

Which has the greater influence in the making of character, heredity or training?—the influences before birth, or those after? The question has been asked of scores of persons. It is surprising how often it has been met with hesitancy, as though a thing not thought into. And surprising too how indecisive the replies usually are.

Yet careful thought makes it plain, and then plainer, that while heredity is great beyond any power of calculation, training is infinitely greater. Or, it would be better said thus: training may be made infinitely greater. Training can be made the greater, yet with the vast majority, as a matter of fact, it isn't. The bent before birth, and the chance, weedy growth after, actually make up the character of the great crowd, with training, properly so called, playing no part because it has no chance.

Training is by far the greater in its possible power. Heredity, with the chance environment it has stumbled across, has actually been the

most potent factor, and is. If the start be early enough, heredity can be wholly overcome by training, though it rarely is. In many instances it is partially overcome. With the vast crowd, the child runs wild like an unkempt vine, or rank weed, and so heredity plus whatever is absorbed by mere chance decides the life.

Bad blood is bad. Bad training is yet worse. Good blood is good, but good training is better. It is easier to train where there is good blood. But then most blood is good, though the pedigree is not recorded. It is rather startling to remember that good training with bad or not-good blood, if you can begin early enough, will give a better life than the best of blood with bad training, or, with the shiftless, weedy no-training.

A Study in Shoes.

The purpose of training is to get character and skill. It has to do with what a man is, and what he can do. Not skill alone, for character gives direction and control to skill, and decides whether it shall be well used or not. And not character alone, immensely important as that is; for without skill to do some one thing well, a man is sorely handicapped. Training should

aim at a strong healthful body, a clear well-stored brain, a deft hand, a gentle spirit, and a pure heart.

The body should be trained for its own sake, and for its influence higher up. It should be properly fed and cared for, and taught to obey the laws of the body that so health may come, and stay. It should be developed symmetrically and trained to hard work. A healthful supple body is the foundation of strong character and of skill. That is where life starts. This is beginning lowest, but not beginning low. At the lowest it is high. The body has immense influence upon mind and character, occupation and career.

The mind should be trained to think clearly, and to acquire knowledge readily. The thinking is more than the knowing. To be able to think clearly, and express one's thoughts simply and concisely is as rare as it is invaluable. The will must be trained to be both servant and master; a good servant, quick and unfailing in its obedience; and so a good master, able to draw out obedience to itself, by every power of body and mind and spirit.

The greatest task of training is here. The will is the citadel, the stronghold. Happy the child taught early to obey fully and promptly and intelligently. So only comes self-restraint,

and, higher up, self-control. The highest attainment of training and of life is self-control. It is this that puts us above the animal creation, and nearest to God. The less self-control the nearer we are to the beasts; the more, the nearer to God. Training aims to teach true standards of action; and then higher and harder, to make the life stand plumb up to the standards.

And self-reliance is no small part of the training task. All men may be divided into three groups by the sort of shoes they wear. Some wear their fathers' shoes, some are shod by their fellows, and some wear shoes of their own making. The fathers' shoes are always too big. It's impossible to get a good footing in such shoes. They make weak feet, and poor walking. The shoes provided by the town are usually down at the heels and out at the toes. They prevent a strong, manly stride.

The only decent shoe for a man to wear is the one of his own making. But a good many men, especially in a new country like ours, have had to pick up their shoemaking the best they could without help, and as a result their shoes squeak a good bit, and remind one constantly of their maker. A man should be trained to make his own shoes, and then in his busy life of service, forget he's made them. A thoughtful, modest, but sturdy self-reliance is an essential of strong character.

The hand should be trained to obey the will of the mind, the whole body in turn obeying the call of the hand. No matter what the life calling may be the hand should be trained to work, and to work skilfully. There would be less useless theory if there were more practical doing of things with the hand. The Hebrews have taught the world much, but nothing of much more practical worth than that every man should be trained to work, and to be an expert in doing some one thing. A deft, skilled hand increases pleasure, and usefulness, and immensely increases independence.

And the training isn't complete without including gentleness of spirit; a spirit thoughtful enough to think of the other man's side of the story, and strong enough to be sympathetic and soft-touched and soft-spoken. And the highest notch is cut in the stick only as purity of heart swings clearly and strongly into view as the greatest attainment of life; and then is earnestly coveted; and then steadily reached up after; and, bit by bit, with the Master's gracious help is both obtained and attained; gotten from Him as a gift, and worked out in one's life as an accomplishment.

A Three-fold Cord.

A man's achievement depends on four things,

the native stuff he is made of, the training of that native stuff, the amount of physical vigor, and the spirit that animates and dominates his life. These same four things enter very largely into the making of character, too, though not so much as into his achievements. Heredity supplies the native stuff, what a man is in himself, apart from all training.

One should never find fault with the stuff he finds in himself; for he has had nothing to do with it being himself; though he has everything to do with what shall be done with it, and by it. The training, the physical vigor, and the controlling spirit decide the part a man shall play in life. With these his parents first of all, and then the growing child, have everything to do.

The physical vigor decides the amount of driving power at command, and so influences greatly the results. The spirit that controls will decide the moral bent of both character and career. The training will affect what shall be done, and especially the quality of work. It will also affect the length of time it takes a man to strike his pace. Untrained talent always takes longer time to get down to its work, and to get results.

Unusual native gift, even though untrained, will forge to the front and make itself felt. But it would do so yet more and better and sooner with training, always provided the training is

not of the sort that spoils the native gift. Men of only average ability give much better account of themselves when well trained.

Physical vigor plays a great part. The average man with a good stomach and a strong back can accomplish far more than the more-than-average fellow with poor stomach and weak back. Though so often a little fellow with poor digestion and wabbly nerves, but with a giant will tied up in his poor equipment, makes everybody and everything stand by and bend to his will; but he does it in spite of heavy odds. How is it that big wills and little bodies go together so frequently?

The ruling spirit really decides a man's worth. One man is selfish, self-centered, concerned wholly with getting every stream to run by his door, and grind the grist of his own mill. The selfishness may be covered up by culture or polish, and not show so much, and have the uglier edges rubbed off where it does show. Or, its ugly face may stand plainly out in full view.

Another man is really gripped, underneath all his transactions, by a wholesome, earnest desire to serve, to be of help to others. All men group up under one of these two. Selfishness carried out to its full, logical end spells Satan. Unselfishness followed up to its source always leads straight to God. This is what is meant by the spirit of the man. It determines, not his

achievement in action, but his worth to the world.

These things radically affect a man's character, as well as his career. For the stronger his body, the better his training, and the more nearly unselfish his spirit, other things being equal, the better and stronger the character he will grow, and the better work he can do. There can be character without training, and without a strong body, but it has a bigger fight for life, and most times goes down in the fight.

It's an immense gain in character-making, and in the service one can do for his fellows, to be strong in body, and well trained mentally. Training, in the broader meaning, has to do with these three things. The gripping purpose in, and under, and through all thought of training should be to get physical strength, a clear, well-stored vigorous mind, and an unselfish spirit.

Street Weeds.

The influences that make and mold character are many and very different. Some are planned directly for their training worth. Others seem to come like the salt air from the ocean, unplanned by us, almost imperceptible sometimes, yet exerting immense power upon character. Some influence character for good, and others for bad.

One of the most potent of all influences in making character is *the street.* The great majority of children, even in Christian lands, grow up in the street. That is to say, not literally in the street, though thousands do, literally, weather permitting. But they are allowed to grow up as they happen to. They simply go, and grow as the impulse seizes them, with practically no guiding nor restraint.

It is surprising to the startling point how many children of Christian homes, or at least church homes, of not-poor homes, as well as of those below that grade, are allowed to drift. There's a simple, striking phrase in Proverbs that is aptly descriptive, "the child *left to itself.*" [1] That tells the story of the great majority of children in city and country alike.

More children are trained in this weedy, shiftless school than in any other. And it is a real training in its influence, a trainingless untrained training that always gets results. It makes character. The child grows up with no fixed standards. He is undisciplined mentally and morally. The training is a huge process of absorption, with only chance to decide what shall be absorbed. Chance plays its own sweet will with them. Utter lack of training controls their lives from the earliest moment.

One can think of no word, to decide the re-

[1] Proverbs xxix:15.

sults mentally and morally, so expressive as the word "weeds." They grow; that's in the nature, to grow; but just like a bunch of weeds, vigorous, rank, disordered, and affecting in a bad way both the soil, and all after attempts at cultivation.

And if there do come up out of this street-school some strong characters it is in spite of the school. It shows the marvelous vitality of the human being. But the handicap suffered affects the whole career. This school is training more children than any other. And its graduates are affecting the whole life of Church and nation immensely. That the results are not worse than they are merely shows what an immense amount of preservative salt has been put into the lump of the human race.

But the results are worse than anybody, even the most thoughtful, realize. Maybe in some far future time some historian will be keen enough (more likely not) to point out that it was the school system—the street-school systemless system—that led to the downfall of the American Republic.

In sharp contrast with this is the great common school system of our country. It is the chief counteractant of the street-school so far as it is counteracted. It supplies a big lump of salt to keep things sweet. The school is one of the greatest moulders of good characters, from

the poorly graded, or ungraded district school, up, through our remarkable public-school system, to the college and university. The influence here in the molding of character is inestimable.

And the Church, with its Sabbath School department, is one of the greatest of all moulding and training factors. Its power in past centuries has been enormous, and is still beyond calculation; though so many agencies to which the Church gave birth have swung off into independent action, and are put above their mother by some in the influence they are thought to exert. But the Church to-day, with all the current criticism of its methods and work, is exerting an influence in the moulding of the child far beyond any power of expression. Its influence in training and moulding character is vastly more than statistics can suggest, and clear beyond the organic expression of its life.

The Heart Touch Upon the Mind.

Companionships breathe into the child's life an atmosphere that greatly affects his character. They seem to happen, even in the fewer instances where thoughtful parents try to choose and guide. Natural likes decide them very largely. The mere being thrown together constantly seems the only thing that decides what

companion a child shall have oftentimes. A bad companion can give a bad twist to the whole life. A thoughtful companion from a good home can as radically affect the life the other way. It is a left-handed influence, all the greater because not planned.

And the rarer friendship that grows up out of companionship does far more. Friendship is like the cream of companionship, the smaller, richer part that separates itself from the rest by its upward movement, and enriches and sweetens the whole life. Neither verbs nor adjectives nor all other parts of speech, can tell the potency of friendship in making and moulding and transforming character. And yet however much the wise father and thoughtful mother may plan they cannot make a friendship for the child. The planning helps. Praying does yet more.

As simple a thing as a book or a picture has great influence in moulding character. Frequently a bad book has blighted and embittered a whole life. Yet more frequently a good book, just one little bunch of small leaves, fastened together, carried off in a pocket, has turned a life completely around. Books and libraries rank very high in their shaping power.

And with the book goes the picture. A bad picture can burn a hole that can't be filled in. It can make a sore that won't heal, and leave a

scar that can't be got rid of. And good pictures are like angels of God in their blessed ministry.

The story is told of a young Yale student of twenty-two. The walls of his room were covered with cheap flaming prints of advertisement pictures and actresses and the like. A friend gave him a copy of Hoffman's wonderful, Gethsemane Christ-head. Whether given with a purpose, or merely as a token of friendship isn't told. The young fellow hung up his new art treasure.

Soon he was up on a chair taking the cheap prints down. That great Christ face caught and gripped him. He said: "I couldn't let those cheap things stay up there beside that face!" Its presence revealed their cheapness. And without doubt the change in the walls of his room told of a change on the inner walls of his heart, too.

Great experiences have remarkable training power. A great sorrow may radically affect the character for a lifetime, even with a very young child. The coming of love into life, *the* life-love, is often as the small warm rain of heaven, and the fragrant dew of a clear, still night, and as the bright shining out of the blue, in bringing a new springtime of mental and moral growth where all had been wintry and barren before.

And conversion has marvelous power over the mental faculties. Real conversion awakens the whole man within. A new gripping life-purpose, a new mental keenness, a new power to sway others, are natural results of conversion. If the thing may be put on so low a level, parents should pray for the child's conversion, not only that his soul may be saved, but that his life may be awakened, and his mental powers aroused into full life. And yet that is not putting it low. The new birth of the Holy Spirit brings a new mental birth, too.

A striking instance of this comes to mind. A young girl of twelve years decided to become a Christian. She was one of a large family of children. The new purpose went down into the vitals of her sensitive nature, and became the over-mastering passion. She had less opportunity of schooling than some of the others. But in strong, gripping life-purpose, in mental keenness, in deep tender sympathy, and in the achievement of her life, she has so far outstripped all the others of the family, parents and children alike, that there seems to be no second.

Careful study and sifting of all the facts leads to the clear, irresistible conclusion that the chief factor in her life has been the touch of the Holy Spirit, to whom she yielded so early and so fully. These are some of the great influences that make and shape the child.

The Home Atmosphere.

But there's another influence so far greater than any of these that it must be put and kept in a class all by itself. The home influence in the training of the child is clear beyond all of these others put together. Indeed most of these, if not all, are outgrowths of the home. All their roots run down here. The home is the center and source of the power that moulds and trains the child.

It may be a very simple home. Poverty's mark may be plainly seen there, and felt more than seen. But it has the power to mould the precious child as neither Church nor school nor any other influence can do. The world's great instructors are obliged to bare their heads, and bow low in reverence of the home. It underlies and outstrips the best they can do. And, in countless instances, it completely undercuts, and to a large extent undoes their best work.

This is *the* training school. More is done here than in all others. What is done here goes deep in, and stays in clear to the end. The young child is utterly open and soft to impression, and never so soft and open afterwards. Father and mother have the training of the child more than pastor, teacher, librarian, or friend can have. Even if they neglect the sacred trust, and enter the child in the street-school for all or any part

of the time, still what they don't do is more than what any one else can do. Their shiftless, planless not-doing is a potent factor, moulding the child more than any other that may come in later.

And by all odds the chief thing in the home-training is *the spirit of the home.* Out on the California coast they go into ecstasies over the remarkable products of the soil, their great trees and flowers, fruits and vegetables. And if you ask the explanation of the unusual growths the answer always refers to the atmosphere. Everything is the atmosphere. That is the secret of all home-training. The spirit of the home does the training most.

A few years ago the leading educators in the East were discussing with much earnestness the matter of shortening the college course to three years. Some urged a change to the shorter term. Others insisted just as earnestly on the present four-year term. In the discussion the president of one of the largest and oldest and highest-standard universities urged the advantage of the four-year term because of the great influence of "university residence," as he termed it. He insisted that the mere living in the university atmosphere influenced and trained the students greatly, quite apart from, and in addition to, the studies scheduled in the curriculum.

This touches at once the stronghold of the

home-training, whichever way its influence may turn. The atmosphere of the home is breathed in by the child, and exerts an influence in his training more, by far, than all other things put together. The child receives more by unconscious absorption than in any other way. He is all ears and eyes and open pores. He is open at every angle and point and direction, and all between. He is an absorbing surface; he takes in constantly; he takes in what is there; and what he takes in makes him.

The spirit of the home then is the one thing on which the keen mind and earnest heart of father and mother will center most, for the child's sake. It should be a spirit of reverence, simple, strong reverence for the unseen Father, and for each one made in His image from babe up.

The brief reading from the old Book of God, the bent knee, the giving of thanks and offering of petition in simplest speech, the table blessing, and all this touched by the reverent sense of the Father's loving presence, with the daily personal life kept true and sweet to this spirit of reverence,—this goes far toward making a home-spirit of untellable power in moulding the child.

And with this may go that which belongs with it, and can be made to grow up out of it—the mental and moral atmosphere. There can be a mental alertness, a sweet wholesomeness of tone,

a cheery quiet poise of temper, in the midst of the busy round of little things that makes up the home life so largely.

The home can be kept orderly, and nothing does more in making character than wholesome orderliness. Wealth can't bring it, nor bare boards keep it away. An untidy home—the uglier word is slovenly—means untidy morals, slovenly thinking and slovenly work. And if spareness of funds compels sharp frugality, that can be made to bring a great blessing. For frugality teaches carefulness in thinking, and in moral decisions, and in speech and in action.

The Child a Mirror of His Parents.

There's a yet better, closer-home way of saying all this: the spirit of the parents is the spirit of the home. In actual life, that means that the spirit of the mother makes the spirit of the home. The father may be ever so strong in character and purpose but he can't make the spirit of the home except as mother and father work together as one. The father simply can't make the home spirit different from what the mother makes it, except as he influences the mother herself.

How shall we give the home the sort of atmosphere that will make strong character? How *can* we do it? Simply and only by yield-

ing the whole personal life fully and sweetly up to the mastery of the Master. If we will recognize His gracious presence, and spend the day with Him, His spirit will fill us, and our homes, and our children. He is as truly in the kitchen as in the cathedral, and may be worshiped as really, even while the hands cook and wash and stitch.

The way to train the child is to train yourself. What you are he will be. If your hands are morally dirty his life will be dirtied by the home handling he gets. If he is to obey his mother he must breathe in a spirit of obedience from his mother. Your child will never obey more than you do. The spirit of disobedience in your heart to God, of failure to obey, of preferring your own way to God's, will be breathed in by your child as surely as he breathes the air into his lungs.

A spirit of quiet confidence in God, in the practical things that pinch and push, will breathe itself into the child. A poised spirit, a keen mind, a thoughtful tongue, a cheery hopefulness, an earnest purpose, in mother and father will be taken into the child's being with every breath. And the reverse is just as true. Every child is an accurate bit of French-plate faithfully showing the likeness of mother and father and home. We must be in heart what we would have the child be in life.

A story is told of a sick child. The physician said he could not recover. The pastor was called in to pray. With sympathetic voice he reverently prayed, "Thy will be done." "No," the mother passionately interrupted, "not that; *my* will; the child must live." And the child did live, and lived to break his mother's heart, and disgrace her name, by the same spirit of self-will she had shown. He simply breathed in his mother's spirit, and lived it out to its logical conclusion. That he lived, was not an answer to prayer, but a coincidence. There was no real prayer on the mother's part. She was more outspoken in her interruption than most. But whatever is the spirit of the heart is breathed in by the child and makes his character.

The Home University.

Then there's the planned training. The home should be thought of as a school, with father and mother as joint principals. The child should have the best mental training it is possible to give him. And it is entirely possible for the humblest home to provide the foundation of a liberal education. Three simple things go a long way toward a liberal education: ability to use one's own language clearly and forcibly, acquaintance with a few good classics of the English tongue, and some general knowl-

edge of history and of the world of affairs.

The books may be few, but they can be chosen, and be choice. The father- and mother-teachers may have hard work holding the roof over their heads, and getting meal from the mill, but the purpose of the life will decide the conduct of both life and home. They can live with their children in their studies. They can piece in spare moment, to keep ahead of the children. They can take bits of time to read with the children and talk over what is read. Many a strong leader of thought among men has had the foundation of his education laid in just such a home, and by such love-wise parents.

There is no finer mental training that can be done than to teach the child the reading habit, a good intelligent book-reading habit. It is astonishing how rare the reading habit is. To the thousands books are sealed treasures. They can listen to men talk if they talk simply enough, but they can't get information out of a book, though they can pronounce the words easily enough. The crowd stands deaf and blind before a book; because they haven't acquired the reading habit while young.

And that is true not simply of the ignorant, but of thousands who are reckoned intelligent, and who are intelligent, in making money, and in discussing the common affairs of life. The book-reading world is a very small one. It's a

very difficult task to write a book that many people will read. The paper-reading, and magazine-reading world is much larger. But the reading is pretty much of a very shallow sort.

Papers and magazines are of great value, if one has learned how to read them. They should have only a small *proportion* of a man's reading time. With thousands they make shallow reading, and shallower thinking, and tongues loose at both ends. To teach a child to read a book thoughtfully is one of the greatest services that can be rendered. The thoughtful mastering of one good book will frequently train and transform the whole life. And, more, it fixes the reading habit which makes all books your helpers and servants.

Then the child's bent of mind should be studied. His natural gifts should be keenly observed. So we may be wisely guided in deciding upon his life occupation. The old passage, so much quoted from Proverbs, "train up a child in the way he should go,"[1] might better be read, "train him up in the way he is inclined by natural gift to go." It seems to refer not to the moral training, but to the training of his native gifts, that so he may be led into the occupation to which he is best suited by natural gift. And as he grows older he won't need to change his work, as is so often done.

[1] Proverbs xxii:6.

And the child should be taught early to know God, and to recognize His inner voice. Samuel's ear was trained very early to recognize God's voice. God speaks to the child. He may be taught very early to recognize that voice. And this will lead very naturally to the decision we call conversion. It is natural for the child, as he is taught of God and of His love, to want to please Him. This is the natural thing.

To do wrong, and sin wilfully, and then have to repent, and go through a more or less violent experience of breaking away from sin and coming to God—this is not the natural order. It has become the necessary order, because of lack of self-training and lack of child-training by parents.

But to lead the child to know God, and to desire to please Him, and never to disobey, nor fail to obey, and so gradually come by almost imperceptible steps and decisions into the maturing Christian life,—this is the true natural order. But the parents must live that way themselves if they are to lead the child that way. What a prod the child is to pure holy living, and stern self-discipline!

Waking a Queen.

And plans should be matured early to give the child the best schooling it is possible for him to

have. Better fewer, plainer clothes on his back, and simpler food in his stomach, and a harder bed for his sleep, if so there may be better drilling for his mind. There is no finer investment of hard-earned, sweat-wet dollars than in giving boy or girl a good schooling. And "good" here means schooling with sensible standards and strong discipline, and with the dignity of labor and the need of experience honored along with book study.

Then comes the time when the child wakes up, if he does. There is no greater moment in a child's life than when he catches fire with the great purpose of life, and wakens up to the part he is to play in life. Father and mother should eagerly plan and pray for the child's awakening to a good consciousness of his powers, and to a strong life-purpose. They should pray too, for courage and patience to help wisely and strongly when that time comes.

There's a fine bit of description in a recent nature book that helps greatly here. A mother eagle had tried in vain to tempt her little one to leave the nest on a high cliff. With food in her talons she came to the edge of the nest, hovered over it a moment, so as to give the hungry eaglet a sight and smell of food, then went slowly down to the valley, taking her food with her, and telling the little one to come and he should have it. He called after her loudly and

spread his wings a dozen times to follow. But the plunge was too awful; he was afraid and settled back into the nest. The writer tells the story thus:

"In a little while she came back again, this time without food, and hovered over the nest, trying every way to induce the little one to leave it. She succeeded at last, when with a desperate effort he sprang upward and flapped to the ledge above. Then after surveying the world gravely from his new place, he flapped back to the nest, and turned a deaf ear to all his mother's assurances that he could fly just as easily to the tree-tops below, if he only would.

"Suddenly, as if discouraged, she rose well above him. I held my breath, for I knew what was coming. The little fellow stood on the edge of the nest, looking down at the plunge which he dared not take. There was a sharp cry from behind, which made him alert, tense as a watch-spring. The next instant the mother-eagle had swooped, striking the nest at his feet, sending his support of twigs and himself with them out into the air together.

"He was afloat now, afloat on the blue air in spite of himself, and flapped lustily for life. Over him, under him, beside him hovered the mother on tireless wings, calling softly that she was there. But the awful fear of the depths and of the lance tops of the spruces was upon the

little one; his flapping grew more wild; he fell faster and faster. Suddenly—more in fright, it seemed to me, than because he had spent his strength—he lost his balance and tipped head downward in the air. It was all over now, it seemed; he folded his wings to be dashed to pieces.

"Then like a flash the old mother eagle shot under him, his despairing feet touched her broad shoulders, between her wings. He righted himself, rested an instant, found his head; then she dropped like a shot from under him, leaving him to come down on his own wings. It was all the work of an instant before I lost them among the trees far below. And when I found them again with my glass the eaglet was in the top of a great pine, and the mother was feeding him.

"And then, standing there alone in the great wilderness, it flashed upon me for the first time just what the wise old prophet meant, 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings—so the Lord.'" [1, 2]

There is no task requiring more God-taught tact and strength and patience than this thing of teaching the child to know and use his powers rightly. And there is no greater joy than, with the rainbow mist in your eyes, to see

[1] Deuteronomy xxxii: 11, 12.
[2] "Wilderness Ways," by W. J. Long.

your child wake up. All unconsciously there comes a new light in his eye, overspreading the face, a new decisiveness in the step, and a new ring in the voice. That is a rare bit of the trainer's full, sweet reward.

Seventy-odd years ago a small group of gentlemen rode through the darkness of the night, and rapped vigorously at a house in old England. They awakened a young girl sleeping within, and told her she was a queen. And as her gracious majesty, Queen Victoria, of ever blessed memory, heard the news she exclaimed, "I'll be a good queen," and begged their prayers that so it might be.

It is among the happiest days in a mother's life when she can awaken her daughter, and tell her she is a queen; and then find that her training has led her into a sweet, queenly womanhood. And it's among the gladdest days of a father's life, when his son awakes into his royal manly power, and with fine modesty and sturdy self-reliance and self-discipline, finds himself habituated by that father's touch and life to be a man.

"Tom Never Left Down the Bars Again."

The great test of home-training is in discipline. When the child has disobeyed, perhaps thoughtlessly, perhaps wilfully,—that is a testing time full of meaning to both parent and child.

It means most to the child, but it means much to the parent.

Here is where right birth will be found to bear some of its finest fruit. The planned birth, with no element of chance, or of anything lower entering in, removes at once a large group of the knottiest problems of discipline. All problems centering in the child's disposition, his docility of spirit, may practically be solved before birth.

Discipline is a great test of love and of wisdom. It calls for a fine tempering together of wisdom and love, firmness and gentleness, insistence upon obedience, but with a love-light in the eye. The old puritanical ideas made stern fathers. Love was sacrificed to a sense of right. Now there is a distinct and dangerous swing the other way, toward a weak laxness of discipline. Neither is ideal, but of the two the former bred stronger men. It takes a good bit of keen work to blend right and love in good proportions.

There's a fine story that comes from a New England home of years ago. It is told by one of the two boys concerned, grown to manhood as he tells the story. He said:

"Once I saved Tom from a promised whipping for leaving down the bars when he went after the cows at milking time, thus giving the young cattle left in the pasture a chance to get out, which they always improved. If they were

on the back side of the lot when Tom got the cows he thought it unnecessary to put up the bars. It would be so short a time when the cows would be driven back.

"Father cautioned and reproved him several times, till finally he threatened to whip him if it happened again. Several weeks passed, and he left the bars down again. The young cattle got into the corn, doing much damage.

"The next morning father said nothing, but went about his usual work. Tom was gloomy; there was an air of depression in the house, and I was greatly troubled. I couldn't bear to have Tom whipped, nor could I blame father. At last I resolved to go and speak to him.

"The sun was shining brightly, and he was opening some tumbles of hay in the east meadow. I approached him slowly, for I did not feel sure of my ground, and stood still without saying a word. He looked up at me and said:

"'Well, Joe, what is it?'

"'I have come to speak to you about Tom. I don't want him whipped.'

"'I do not see how you can help it, my son. I cannot have my crops destroyed in this way, and I must keep my word.'

"'Father, didn't you read this in the morning lesson: "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities, and by His stripes we are healed."'

"'Yes; what a boy you are to remember, Joe.'

"'Well, I will take half the blows you intend to give Tom.'

"'I can't do that, Joe. Tom is the transgressor, not you,' father answered, his face softening and his voice trembling a little. Then looking at me keenly, he asked:

"'Did Tom send you to me?'

"'No. He knows nothing of my coming.'

"My father stood leaning on his pitchfork with both hands, looking down on the ground. At length he said:

"'Go and bring Tom.'

"I found him on the front porch with a sober face, trying to study.

"'Come with me, Tom; father wants you.'

"'I know what he wants,' turning a little pale. After a moment's hesitation he arose, saying:

"'I might as well go now and have it done with.'

"As we walked along I thought best to give him a little advice, for he generally did as occasion served him. There was no knowing beforehand what he would do.

"'Now, Tom, you mustn't flare up or show any spunk. You must be humble and answer father's questions in a good kind of way. You

mustn't talk any; only answer his questions. I don't think he'll be hard with you.'

"To this he made no reply. He evidently thought it easy for me to talk; the stripes were not coming down on my back.

"Father stood as I had left him. I can see him now, after the lapse of so many years, with his back to the morning sun, leaning forward a little on the stail of his fork, looking down to the ground, one hand above the other and his chin on his hands, and some forkfuls of hay scattered about him.

"He did not seem to see us. He was lost in reverie.

"'Father,' I ventured timidly, 'Tom is here.'

"He looked up at us both quickly, then said:

"'Tom, do you remember these words in our Scripture reading this morning, "He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities, and by His stripes we are healed?"'

"'Yes, sir,' answered Tom, greatly surprised.

"'What do you think those words mean?'

"'That Christ suffered for us,' replied Tom, his voice unsteady and his face flushing up.

"'Well, Joe offers to suffer for you.'

"Tom turned to me with a look on his face I shall never forget, and exclaimed:

"'No, Joe, you shall not do that.'

"Then, flinging his arms around my neck, he kissed me, and, quick as a flash, stepped up to father and held out his hand, saying:

"'The stripes belong to me, father; I am ready.'

"Tears were now falling down father's face, and for a minute he could not speak. Then he said:

"'No, Tom, I cannot punish anyone now. I do not think you'll ever forget this day. If you do, remember Joe's offer holds good. I love my children, and I want to do them all the good I can. But I must be obeyed and that is one way of doing them good. You may go now.'

"Tom did not stir. He was evidently waiting for me and yet, for some reason I could not explain, I hesitated. Stepping closer, I said:

"'Father, I want to kiss you.'

"He caught me in his arms, saying: 'Oh, my boy,' and kissed me. Then taking Tom, who was ready, he said: 'God bless you, dear Tom,' kissing him with swimming eyes.

"Then, with a great awe upon us, we went to the house. I will add that Tom never left the bars down again."[1]

What a blessed picture of God that father found opening up to him as he acted the part of God to his erring son! What a new motive

[1] "Home Memories," Eli Barber.

power love put into that boy's life from that moment on!

The love of Christ constrains to earnest service, and it also restrains from sin. If we might know that great love of His better and live it more simply. For love, His love in us, is the secret of all training.

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